# PLAIN SENSE,

## A NOVEL,

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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'Reaſon ſtill uſe, to reaſon ſtill attend.'

POPE.

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VOL. II.

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MAY

# PLAIN SENSE.

## CHAP. I.

——" Oimè fortuna fella,
" Che cambio è queſto, che tu fai ?
" Colui."
" Che eſſer dovea, levato m' hai.
" Ti par che in luogo, ed inveſtor di quello
" Si debba por coſtui, ch' ora mi dai ?"

ARIOSTO.

FROM the inſtant of their quitting Stanton Park, Sir William's behaviour was entirely changed—he ſeemed not now to wiſh to diſguiſe the ill opinion he had formed of her. He reproached her explicitly for the pleaſure ſhe had manifeſted in the company of Henry, and he openly exulted in the art with which he had laid her caution uſeleſs, and by which he had been able to aſcertain her real ſentiments.

Ellen heard Sir William with an ndignant aſtoniſhment, that for ſome time deprived her of the power of ſpeech—She knew not how to defend herſelf againſt a charge, the truth

of which involved no criminality. She had conſidered every mark of regard which ſhe had ſhewn to Henry as ſanctioned by Sir William's expreſs approbation, and ſhe knew it did not contain a particle of that kind of love which the moſt extended of his rights could prohibit.

The reſentments of Ellen were always ſhort-lived, and even before ſhe had voice to reply to Sir William's injuries, ſhe felt ſomewhat like compaſſion, though perhaps a little mingled with contempt, riſe in her mind towards him.

"That it can ſuit your ideas of honor and tenderneſs," ſaid ſhe, "to endeavour to betray thoſe who you are bound to defend, is what I can only be ſincerely ſorry for; but to treat that as a diſcovery which you owe to your own artifice; that, which at no time has been diſavowed on my part, is a vain endeavour to dupe me a ſecond time: Tho' innocence is unſuſpicious, it is not ſottiſh. Be aſſured you have diſcovered nothing, for nothing was attempted to be concealed:—From the firſt hour I accepted your heart, you knew the whole of mine; if you have not ſecured it your own long before now, the failure has not ariſen from my partiality to another, but from the want of thoſe qualities in yourſelf, on which affection only can be grounded: I have laboured to love you, and never were you ſo nearly in poſſeſſion of my heart, as at the moment when you have choſen to load me with the moſt injurious reproaches. What can I ſay, moſt unhappy of men, what can I ſay, but that my heart ſhall

ſhall ſtill be yours, when you know how to deſerve it."

Sir William trembled with paſſion—the truth flaſhed upon him—it was the lightning's flaſh that ſtrikes and kills. To believe himſelf alone accountable for the loſs of Ellen's true affections, was a pang of ſuch intolerable anguiſh, as human nature could not bear. To think her falſe and worthleſs was a ſuffering of a milder kind. Baring his mind againſt conviction, he gave way to a rage which was only a temporary aſſuagement of his ſufferings, the ſource in future of the bittereſt ſelf-reproach.

The agitation that his violence occaſioned to Ellen, threw her into labour: Her ſituation became critical and hazardous, in a very high degree, and Sir William would have almoſt conſented to have ſeen her in the arms of Mr. Villars, to have been aſſured of her life! It was not however, by the death of Ellen that heaven had determined to puniſh Sir William—She was delivered of a boy and declared out of danger.

Amidſt the varied anguiſh, compoſed of grief, terror, and reſentment, that filled the mind of Ellen, ſhe experienced as ſhe claſped her child to her boſom, a ſource of joy which no misfortune that threatened herſelf alone could embitter; yet ſhe regretted but the more that in the father of her infant ſhe could not love the huſband of her choice.

Sir William, under pretence of guarding her from every emotion that might be prejudicial, abſented himſelf for ſome days from her

apartment; and Ellen made uſe of this interval to bring her mind into ſuch a ſtate of charity with him, as would enable her to receive him, when they did meet, with a kindneſs, that might ſhew her diſpoſed to forget all that had paſſed at their laſt interview.

She preſented his ſon to him with a faint ſmile, ſaying, "Let this be the pledge of oblivion for all that is paſſed, and the aſſurance of an unbroken amity for the time to come."

"A ſon!" ſaid Sir William, looking earneſtly in the boy's face.

"Did you not know it was a boy?" ſaid Ellen.

"Yes," returned Sir William, and again repeated, "A ſon!"

"Dear Sir William, take your child into your arms, the touch of his lips will baniſh every uneaſy thought—I have found them a ſovereign panacea."

"So might I too!—"

"Why do you not try then?"

"No, it is a woman's remedy."

"It is a *parent's*," returned Ellen.

"True," ſaid Sir William; but he touched not the child.

Ellen pained, wondering, confuſed, by a variety of indiſtinct thoughts, haſtily ſnatched the boy to her heart and burſt into tears.

Sir William alarmed, tried to ſooth her by every tender expreſſion he could think of; but he did not careſs the child, nor did he appear to regard it either as a pledge of oblivion, or as an aſſurance of amity.

Ellen

Ellen recovered ſlowly, the anxiety of her mind affected her body; ſhe ſaw Sir William gloomy and diſcontented, and though he reſtrained himſelf from acts or words of ill humour or reproach, the ſame dark ſuſpicions ſeemed to lower in his mind, and the ſame reſentment to poſſeſs his breaſt.

Ellen was now able to go out in her carriage, and ſhe thought it proper no longer to delay making Sir William acquainted with the reſolution ſhe had formed. It was not long before he gave her an opportunity of doing ſo.

On meeting her one day on her return from an airing, he obſerved that the colour began to return to her cheek, and the uſual life to appear in her eye, and he added, in a cold and reproachful tone, "You will ſoon be able to return to ſociety, you will ſoon be able to ſee *all* your friends."

"I have a very few words to ſay, Sir William, on that ſubject," returned Ellen, "and if you are at leiſure, be kind enough to hear them now."

"You are not going to make me a ſpeech?"

"I do not deal in oratory," replied Ellen, "what I have to ſay will be compriſed in a very few words."

"Well, Madam," cried he, with an air of provoking mockery, "I attend."

"When firſt I was made ſenſible of the unjuſt ideas that you entertained of my character," ſaid Ellen, I was led to hope that ſuch jealouſy might only be the exuberancy

of too ardent a love, and I truſted to that love and my own rectitude for the remedy: When I had reaſon to think the evil had a deeper root, that it ſprung from the conſtitution of your mind, and that, perhaps, you could not change it, I offered, with the moſt genuine ſincerity, to withdraw with you from the whole world, and to live only for you. This was treated as the flight of an abſurd and romantic mind, and I was enjoined to conduct myſelf to all with whom I converſed without diſtinction—I obeyed this injunction as far as it was poſſible to obey it:—The honeſt affections of the heart, which I had always avowed, and the difference that muſt ariſe in our intercourſe with the wiſe, and the fooliſh, the good and the bad, ſtood not controuled, nor could they by this injunction. You know if ever my diſtinction went beyond what ſuch affections and ſuch difference could warrant; and I know, moſt feelingly, that notwithſtanding a conduct reſulting from ſuch principles, as will ſtand the ſtricteſt inveſtigation, I have not been able to acquit myſelf in your opinion: I believe it impoſſible that you ſhould at this time doubt my honor, but you ſcruple not to tell me, that I have voluntarily given my affections to another:—What may you not next believe?—I ſhrink from the thought, and it behoves me to preſerve myſelf from a ſuſpicion that may involve in the effects of its injuſtice thoſe who are yet unborn: What I once aſſumed as a kindneſs to you, I now aſk as a favor and ſhelter for myſelf. I will not again join any ſociety, I will not again ſee

any

any friends that can awaken injurious doubts in your breaſt. If it is your will that I ſhall remain in town, I will remain there as a cloſe priſoner in my own houſe; but if you wiſh to avoid the appearance of ſingularity, which this will have to the world, I beg you will ſuffer me to go down to Oakley, my health will furniſh a reaſonable pretence for ſuch a ſecluſion, and there I cannot give you even the ſhadow of a cauſe for thoſe jealouſies which wrong me, and make you miſerable."

Sir William appeared ſtruck with the greateſt aſtoniſhment, by the calm and impreſſive ſtatement, that Ellen thus made of her wrongs, and of her conduct: Some purpoſe labouring in his mind ſeemed, in ſpite of himſelf, to be ſuſpended by the power of truth.

"Would you go alone?" ſaid he.

"I ſhall not be alone, my boy will be with me, and I will yet hope that all love for me is not ſo extinct in his father's breaſt, but that he may ſometimes be induced to viſit us."

A ſudden ſhade of diſtruſt and indignation croſſed Sir William's brow.

"You doubt it not,—his father will viſit you."

"I hope ſo," ſaid Ellen warmly. "Then you approve my plan, Sir William?—You will ſuffer me to remove to Oakley?"

"Yes, to queen it there—to court popularity by inſidious charities—to form a party of the ſcum of the earth—to build your reputation on the downfall of mine."

"Good God!" exclaimed Ellen, then checking herſelf, "far are all ſuch thoughts

from me," ſaid ſhe, "I have no predilection for Oakley; you have an eſtate in Wales, let me go there—Send me into the North of Scotland—baniſh me to Ireland,—do with me what you will, with this exception only, do not keep me here, and compel me into company, where the pureſt innocence cannot preſerve me from the fouleſt ſuſpicion."

Again Sir William's reſolution ſeemed to be ſhaken—he remained ſilent and thoughtful.

"If I could believe it was prejudice and falſhood ——

"I know not what means to uſe to convince you it is ſo, but ſuch as I have uſed in vain," ſaid Ellen, "it appears to me that your mind is deeply infected with a diſtemper that nothing but time and your own reflections will cure; let me wait the reſult of theſe quietly and inoffenſively, far from any poſſibility, by any manners or conduct of my own, of increaſing the evils:—No happineſs reſults to either of us from being now together; on the contrary, ſo many cauſes of mutual offence may ariſe, as may ſerve definitively to alienate our hearts from each other, and make it impoſſible at any future period, however diſtant, to entertain that mutual friendſhip ſo eſſential to our happineſs, our virtue, and our reputation.'

"Well," ſaid Sir William, after a moment's pauſe, "be it ſo, the experiment may ſerve as a trial in more ways than one: But whom do you mean to take into your ſecret? Who is to be confidant?"

"No

"No one—this is a ſecret I would willingly conceal from myſelf, and be aſſured I will not burthen any one elſe with the knowledge of it."

"And ſhall you not write a pathetic letter to *your couſin*, deſiring he will keep out of your way, and bidding him farewell?—And talk of the ſacrifice of *friendſhip* to duty, the hope of better times, when innocence will have all its rights, when you may avow the *eſteem* with which you always have been, and always ſhall be—And ſo turn a period and make a flouriſhing concluſion?—Would not this be according to rule?"

"The paroxyſm is ſtrong now indeed," ſaid Ellen, "I will leave you, and wait your deciſion as to where I ſhall go."

"Stay, that may be decided in a moment: Oakley is the beſt place, your retreat there will appear moſt natural, and raiſe leaſt conjecture. When ſhall you be able to go?"

"In leſs than a week, and I entreat you, Sir William, to let that time be ſpent with as little diſcompoſure as poſſible. On my part you ſhall ſee nothing but good humour, and if you will permit it, cheerfulneſs."

"Good God! why ſhould we part?—Oh! Ellen, are you all you ſeem to be?"

"I hope you will, ere long, be convinced I am; and I think the preſent arrangement moſt likely to produce that conviction."

"You wiſh then to go?"

"I do, but I ſhould not if I could believe that continuing here, I could ward off thoſe unjuſt thoughts that make us both ſo miſerable."

"I believe you had better go, perhaps I ſhall ſooner come to my ſenſes in your abſence; perhaps the preſent ſeparation may make every future hour we are to ſpend together happier.

## CHAP. II.

"Say, from affliction's various ſource,
"Do none but turbid waters flow?"

MASON.

IN a few days Ellen left town, for Oakley, taking with her her beloved boy. He ſeemed the only human being whom ſhe might love unreproved, or at leaſt the only one for whom her affections were not embittered by ſome painful reflection.

She could not conceal from herſelf that Sir William ſtudiouſly held her apart from her family, and he had ſo profeſſedly ſet his face againſt Miſs Thornton, that except one ſingle fortnight which ſhe had ſpent at Oakley, Ellen had not ſeen her ſince her marriage; nor was he more willing that either of her ſiſters ſhould be with her, and in the early days of the breaking out of his diſcontent, he had reproached her for loving her father with a warmer affection than ſhe loved him.

With Lady Almeria who was always ſurrounded

rounded by a ſociety in which he himſelf found pleaſure, and whom he knew Ellen could not love; and with her brother, who ſhewed not much love to her, he ſuffered her to aſſociate with that degree of familiarity the nearneſs of their connexion warranted, but he held her as much as poſſible aloof from the whole world beſides. He wiſhed her to be always in company, but he would have had the promiſcuous crowd with which he had ſurrounded her wholly and alike indifferent to her.

A mode of life in which the affections had no ſhare would have been, in itſelf, extremely irkſome to Ellen, and when joined to the more poſitive evils that Sir William ſpared not to inflict, became inſupportable. At Oakley ſhe ſeemed to repoſe as in a ſecure harbour, after having been long toſſed in ſtorms that threatened ſhipwreck.

She nurſed her boy, and this was one reaſon that was given to the world for her retiring to the country at that ſeaſon of the year, when every body elſe was flocking to town. This occupation was a perpetual ſource of delight and intereſt to her. Alone at Oakley, ſhe could dedicate the whole of her time and her thoughts to ſo delightful a care, and ſhe ſaw, or fancied ſhe ſaw, in the ſtout limbs, and intelligent ſparkling eyes of her darling, the proof and the reward of her more than common love.

Lady Almeria had dragged her poor little baby to town with her, where neglect and want of good air ſoon reduced it to a very pitiable

tiable object. Ellen was told it was ill, and earneſtly entreated Lady Almeria to let it join the nurſery at Oakley: To this requeſt ſhe readily acceded, and the little Almeria was ſent down into Berkſhire, to add to the cares and pleaſures of Ellen.

With her two children, and the various means of occupation which her underſtanding and her heart provided her with, Ellen began to regain a degree of eaſe and happineſs, which, except at very ſhort intervals, had been long a ſtranger to her boſom. All remains of reſentment towards Sir William entirely ſubſided; ſhe again flattered herſelf that if ſhe could once inſpire him with a taſte for the calm delights of the country, ſhe might be able in time to correct his unhappy aptitude to ſuſpicion, to eradicate all jealouſy from his mind, and making him worthy of her love, love him with an affection more reaſonable, and as warm as any he had ever felt for her: She congratulated herſelf on the part ſhe had taken, and was ready to perſuade herſelf that her paſt vexations were only a more certain road to happineſs.

She wrote to Sir William frequently, detailing all ſhe did, and recounting the witticiſms of Almeria, who, however, could not yet ſpeak, and the wonderful tricks and atchievements of her boy. In return, Sir William's letters were ſhort, contained little but the anecdote of the day, and never replied in any way to the domeſtic and nurſery ſtories which made the ſubject of Ellen's.

Ellen was willing to lay all this inſenſibility

to the way of life Sir William was engaged in, ſo unfavorable to the feelings of the parent and the huſband, and to hope the cure for all lay in his being made ſenſible of the ſuperior pleaſure that could ariſe from ſuch feelings, to that which every other gratification apart from them could beſtow. In this hope ſhe urged him much to make a viſit to Oakley, but hitherto he had attended little to her requeſt.

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## CHAP. III.

" O ſommo dio, com e i giu digi umani,
" Speſſo offuſcati ſon da un nembo oſcuro."

WHILE Ellen was thus indulging herſelf in every virtuous propenſity, and already began to reap the reward that uſually attends the gratification of ſuch propenſities, Henry was a prey to the moſt tormenting diſquietude.

On his arrival in town he had learned Ellen's removal into the country, and he had heard aſſigned as a reaſon for it, her own health, which had ſuffered much from her confinement, and the cares ſhe had taken upon her with reſpect to her boy. Nothing could appear more natural than theſe reaſons, and with Henry, who knew Ellen's diſpoſition, they would

would have found, but for one circumſtance, a moſt ready belief.

Sir William's conduct during the time they had all paſſed in Devonſhire together, had compleatly deceived him; he believed that Sir William felt for Ellen all the love that ſhe was ſo well formed to inſpire, and he never had reaſon to ſuppoſe that Ellen did not rejoice in and return his love. But in Henry's opinion it ill conſiſted with ſuch a mutual affection, that Sir William ſhould ſuffer Ellen to go without him into the country, in circumſtances which ſhe might be ſuppoſed particularly to call for more than common attention, or that he could conſent ſo ſoon to loſe ſight of their firſt pledge of love; a boy too, which is generally as dear to a father as a mother.

It was this circumſtance that raiſed a ſuſpicion in the mind of Henry, that there was ſomething more in Ellen's preſent retirement than the world in general believed; yet was he cautious in his endeavours to diſcover whether his ſuſpicions were grounded in truth, leſt he ſhould communicate ſimilar doubts to others.

He threw himſelf as much as poſſible in the way of Sir William, who preſerved towards him the manners he had held when they were together in Devonſhire—it being Sir William's unalterable reſolution, even in the vengeance that he meditated againſt Ellen, that the world ſhould never know that he had entertained a ſuſpicion of her virtue or her love.

Sir William would often ſpeak of Ellen, would mention the partiality ſhe entertained for

for a country life, the new-born attachment to her boy, which ſeemed to ſwallow up every other affection, and ſometimes he would lament that it deprived himſelf, and the reſt of her friends, of her company in town.

Henry upon thoſe occaſions was ſtrongly tempted to aſk, what could detain him there, while Ellen was in the country, but as he could not forget, neither could he hope, that Sir William could forget the connexion that had once been between Ellen and himſelf. The remembrance of this connexion impoſed a ſcrupulous delicacy upon him whenever he mentioned Ellen to Sir William.

As it was a ſubject he never began, ſo it it was one that he always put an end to as ſoon as poſſible. Sir William perceived this ſhyneſs and imputed it to the worſt of motives; from a reſtleſs deſire to diſcover what he dreaded to aſcertain, he ſcarcely ever ſaw Henry without introducing in ſome way or other the ſubject of Ellen's retirement, and Henry at length began to think there was ſomething of affectation, or deſign, in this.

While Henry's mind was in this ſtate of ſuſpence, Lady Almeria awakened him to a much more lively ſuſpicion of the truth.

Lady Almeria's own attendant was couſin to the woman who waited upon Ellen, they were both Northumberland girls, and Ellen's ſervant had ſpent all her life, 'till taken into Ellen's ſervice, within a bow-ſhot of Groby-Manor.

Hence ſhe could tell of the early love between her lady and Mr. Villars, of the cruel-

ties

ties of Lord Villars, the diſtreſs of the lovers, the ſudden appearance of Henry on the eve of Ellen's marriage, with every circumſtance relating to the affair that was made public, and with many that had never happened, and which were reported from miſapprehenſion and conjecture.

It was from her knowledge of much that really had paſſed, and from her belief in ſtill more that never paſſed, that ſhe had drawn the concluſion that Ellen would never love Sir William. Thus from the day of her marriage ſhe never ſaw a ſhade of diſcontent upon Ellen's brow that ſhe did not impute (according to the chamber-maid-like idea of the invincibility of a firſt paſſion) to her having been croſſed in love.

With a mind thus pre-occupied by this fancy, it was not poſſible that the whole of Sir William's unkindneſs, and its effects upon Ellen, ſhould be entirely concealed from her. What ſhe fell ſhort of in real knowledge, ſhe made up in conjecture, and all ſhe conjectured ſhe reported as fact.—Much of it indeed was ſo, though ſhe did not know it.

Ellen having left ſome books in town, locked up in a cabinet, of which ſhe had the key with her in the country, about this time ſent her maid to town to bring them to her.

Jenny, who had her mind full of all that ſhe believed had happened in Sir William's family ſince ſhe laſt ſaw her couſin, made uſe of ſome of the few hours that ſhe ſpent in town in a viſit to Lady Almeria's houſe, and there

there ſhe fully detailed to her ſiſter goſſip, all ſhe knew, and all ſhe believed ſhe knew.

She told of Ellen's violent illneſs, immediately following an angry converſation with Sir William: She repeated ſome words ſhe had accidentally overheard—ſhe dwelt on the length of time which he had abſented himſelf from the apartment of Ellen—on the diſlike that he ſeemed to have to the child—on the grief that ſhe had often witneſſed in Ellen's countenance and manner—on the unkindneſs of Sir William, in never having once viſited Oakley ſince Ellen had retired thither—and on the contentment and eaſe Ellen ſeemed to experience notwithſtanding his abſence.

From all theſe circumſtances thoſe two Machiavel's concluded, with a certainty, that left no room for doubt, that Sir William was jealous of Mr. Villars, that he had baniſhed Ellen into the country to prevent their meeting, and that Ellen had more ſatisfaction alone, and left to the remembrance of her firſt love, than, from the unkindneſs and ſuſpicion of Sir William, ſhe had ever enjoyed in the world, and in his ſociety.

As Jenny ſincerely loved her miſtreſs, all Ellen did was right in her eyes; and if ſhe had been employed by her in carrying on an intercourſe with Henry, ſhe would eaſily have excuſed her on the ſcore of the unconquerable nature of a firſt paſſion, and the provocation received from a jealous huſband; ſuch circumſtances forming a ſpecies of apology, that in vulgar minds is a ſufficient excuſe for every enormity.

But

But as Jenny thought Ellen extremely injured, ſo ſhe knew her to be perfectly innocent; and hence ſhe painted her as the moſt patient ſufferer, and Sir William as the worſt and moſt unkind of human creatures.

Lady Almeria's woman had often heard her Lady expreſs ſomewhat of contempt, and a good deal of ſurpriſe, on Ellen's withdrawing from town at that ſeaſon of the year, and ſhe had heard her throw out, as no improbable ſuppoſition, that it was contrary to her own wiſh, and the effect of Sir William's arbitrary jealouſy; ſhe had, however, alſo heard her declare that ſhe was not in the ſecret, and did not in fact really know what the cauſe was.

Lady Almeria, amongſt her other foibles, had that moſt pernicious one of buſying herſelf much in the affairs of others; ſhe had always taken upon her to foretell that the marriage of Ellen with Sir William would end ill, and ſhe looked with ſome degree of eagerneſs for every circumſtance that could tend to prove that her predictions were fulfilled.

From theſe defects in Lady Almeria's character, Betty always found herſelf well liſtened to when ſhe talked of the characters of her Lady's acquaintance, or repeated anecdotes out of their reſpective families.

All therefore that ſhe had heard from her couſin was moſt eagerly poured out as a torrent the next time ſhe attended upon Lady Almeria, and it was poured out with all thoſe exaggerations and embelliſhments that ſo readily occur to every relator of everyſtory, who wiſhes

wiſhes to make the moſt of what is to be told. Every thing that Betty related found ready credence with Lady Almeria, and in a few hours after ſhe had heard the ſtory, meeting with Henry:

"Now," ſaid ſhe, "I can clear up the wonderment of Lady Ackland's running away from us in ſuch a ſtrange manner; that brute, Sir William, is jealous of you, and he means to confine Ellen to Oakley as long as ſhe lives; and woe be to you both, if you approach the threſhold!"

Henry turned pale as death.

"Let me beg Lady Almeria," ſaid he, "that you will not indulge yourſelf in ſuch wild fancies,—much leſs repeat them.

"Oh! you don't believe me?—Come this way, then, and I will give you ſuch a proof as will clear my veracity in a moment."

"Why ſhould I be convinced of what would give me inexpreſſible pain to believe?"

"It cannot give you more pain than it does me: I have been in a perfect fidget ever ſince I heard it—I am ſure I dare not tell Mr. Mordaunt half, he'd be for cutting Sir William's throat, or ſome ſuch thing, for you never heard of ſuch a dragon."

Henry's curioſity now got the better of his prudence, and he liſtened to all Lady Almeria had to tell:——but with what emotions he liſtened to it, it is not poſſible to expreſs. His whole frame trembled, and his agitation was ſo great, that Lady Almeria began to repent that ſhe had choſen a public aſſembly for ſuch a communication.

"Come,

"Come, I will tell you no more," ſaid ſhe, "How you do love this Ellen ſtill!——I do not believe thereis ſuch another conſtant ſwain in the bills of mortality."

"I muſt know all now," ſaid Henry, "coſt me what it will, you have ſet me on the rack."

"But I dare not:——It will be you that will be for cutting Sir William's throat at this rate."

"No, I have no ſuch thoughts: Sir William will live ſafe from my vengeance: But what is there more to hear?"

"Bleſs me, not much: It is eaſy to ſuppoſe what a jealous, an unreaſonable man will ſay and do——But Ellen is ſo reſerved that I don't find ſhe has ever complained, even to her maid."

"Complained!——To her maid!——" repeated Henry, "No, Ellen knows how to ſuffer, but not to complain."

"And ſo ſhe will have no redreſs! I ſee no mighty wiſdom in that. Were I in her place I would complain, and loudly too——Men may be managed by their fears, and Sir William would not dare to uſe her ſo, if he thought ſhe would expoſe his conduct to the world.

Henry was in no humour to diſcuſs the propriety of ſuch maxims, and finding he could draw no farther particulars from Lady Almeria, he earneſtly recommended what yet he could not hope ſhe would practiſe, the ſtricteſt ſilence, and withdrew with a heart oppreſſed almoſt beyond ſufferance.

Although Mr. Villars was well aware of the ſuſpicious quarter from which he had received his

his intelligence; and though in any matter where the happineſs of Ellen had not been concerned, ſuch evidence as that on which it reſted, would not have fixed any circumſtance for a moment in his thoughts, yet in a caſe where ſo much was at ſtake, his apprehenſions gave credibility to the moſt doubtful teſtimony; and this teſtimony ſeemed to be confirmed by ſeveral particulars, of the truth of which he could not entertain a doubt.

He knew the ſudden and dangerous illneſs of Ellen, which was now aſcribed to Sir William's violence, to be a fact; and he had before been told, that it had been occaſioned by a fright. It was alſo certain, that ſhe had retired into the country, and that Sir William ſo far from accompanying her, had never even viſited her ſince her reſidence there. The frequent, and what now more than ever appeared to be officious converſations, with him upon this ſubject, returned with added effect upon his mind, and he felt perſuaded that they had been held with a deſign to confirm or do away ſuſpicions which he was now convinced Sir William had entertained.

Theſe ſuſpicions ſeemed, it is true, ill to agree with the friendly and open conduct he had held towards him while in Devonſhire; or with the continuation of the ſame in their intercourſe in town: But Henry could not help fearing, that this conduct, which might be uſed as a cloak to his real thoughts, was rather a proof that the evil lay deep, than that it did not exiſt.

A thouſand ſchemes did he revolve in his mind

mind as to what he could or ought to do towards the diſcovery of the truth; and towards the alleviation of the evil if it did ſubſiſt: But to every one he found inſupportable objections, and was obliged to reſt in the concluſion, however contrary to his wiſhes he might find it, that the ſafeſt and beſt courſe he could purſue, was to do nothing.

Impelled however by feelings very ſimilar, Sir William and he met continually: Their minds were equally occupied by the ſame ſubject, and though both were ſhy in their manner of treating it, they found no intereſt in any other.

Henry obſerved that Sir William inquired frequently into his motions; and remarked, that he was particularly inquiſitive whether his love for hunting did not carry him often to the Lodge. Henry was ſometimes, upon ſuch occaſions betrayed, by his eagerneſs to do away all ſuſpicion in Sir William's mind, into a minuteneſs of detail and a warmth of denial, that rather ſeemed as the cover to the truth, than the ſimple declaration of it.

Seldom therefore did Sir William and Henry converſe together without Henry being more than ever convinced of the jealouſy Sir William had conceived, and Sir William confirmed in the juſtice of it.

By theſe converſations, and the reflections Sir William made upon them, his mind was at length wrought up to ſuch a pitch of miſery and indignation, that he reſolved to withhold the meditated revenge no longer, but preparatory to the blow he intended to ſtrike, it was neceſſary

neceſſary to ſee Ellen, and lull her if poſſible into perfect ſecurity.

For this purpoſe he no longer delayed to viſit Oakley; there, however, ſuch a ſcene awaited him, as again broke in upon all his deſigns, and ſuſpended his mind once more in the agitating balance of uncertainty.

## CHAP. IV.

"What angel ſhall
"Bleſs this unworthy huſband? He cannot thrive!"
SHAKESPEARE.

SIR WILLIAM found Ellen blooming with health, and her ingenuous countenance marked with the placid look of content, which virtue only can impreſs: He found her buſied in every rural and every domeſtic care, living with her children perpetually in her arms, occupied wholly with them, and apparently without a thought which wandered from the environs of Oakley.

He was received by her with ſuch marks of genuine ſatisfaction, as ſeemed not to leave a doubt but that he was truly welcome to her, and that it would be his own fault if he did not derive from her ſociety every happineſs he could deſire.

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Such appearances were ſo entirely incompatible with the guilt he had been ſo ready to impute to her, as to compel him for ſome time, in ſpite of himſelf, to do her juſtice. Yet, if ſhe did not love Henry, how came ſhe to be ſo happy in the abſence of her huſband? The anſwer that his conſcience forced from him to this queſtion, gave him a pang of ſelf-reproach, that he knew not how to endure.

If her heart be not another's—yet I have loſt it for ever, thought he. But no, it is in loving Henry that ſhe has ceaſed to love me. My conduct towards her has juſtified this dereliction in her eyes, and hence the eaſe and ſatisfaction that appears in her countenance; hence the deep hypocriſy ſhe is enabled to maintain.

Such thoughts as theſe were ſupplanted by others more worthy of Ellen; and theſe were again driven from his mind by freſh ſuſpicions and new jealouſies. What would he not have given for Morgana's cup, or the little boy's mantle.

Ellen remarked the perturbation of his mind, and ſhe ſtrove to allay it by the moſt affectionate cheerfulneſs. It would not have been poſſible to have ſuppoſed from any word or look that eſcaped Ellen, that ſhe had withdrawn into the country to avoid the violent effects of the moſt unjuſt jealouſy; or that ſhe retained an atom of reſentment for the injuries ſhe had received. A perfect oblivion as to all that had paſſed before her removal to Oakley, ſeemed to have pervaded her mind. She appeared willing to conſider that period as

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a new epoch of her life, from which, if he pleaſed, Sir William might date their mutual happineſs.

Sir William had now ſpent three weeks in Berkſhire, and ſo far had the mild and wiſe demeanour of Ellen wrought upon his mind, that he began to conſider all his paſt fears but as the horrors of a frightful dream from which he was now awakened.

If he could always live with Ellen at Oakley he thought he could ſubdue his jealouſy; but to live always at Oakley, even with an angel, was what little ſuited his taſte. It would not, however, he knew, be difficult to perſuade Ellen to continue there altogether. This indeed appeared to be what ſhe deſired, and if he could be aſſured that ſhelived there wholly to herſelf and children, he was willing to flatter himſelf that the kindneſs with which he doubted not ſhe would always receive him when he choſe to join her, would be ſufficient for his own happineſs.

To this ſcheme of ſelfiſh felicity there was only one objection that aroſe in his mind; he feared there might be ſome myſtery in the choice Ellen ſeemed to have made of Oakley for her reſidence, and the neighbourhood of the Lodge recurred to his remembrance, and brought with it a ſudden pang of jealouſy that made him ſtart.

The experiment however he thought worth trying. If Ellen were innocent ſhe might be ſafely truſted at Oakley, if ſhe were guilty the place of her abode was a matter of little conſequence. Time and obſervation could alone

clear this important point, and to time and obſervation he reſolved to refer it.

Sir William was in this ſtate of mind, not wholly cured of his ſuſpicions, and yet willing to believe them ill founded, when an event happened that ſeemed to his diſturbed imagination to carry conviction with it; it fixed him immoveably in his plan of vengeance, and ſealed the deſtiny of Ellen.

Both the children were ſeized at the ſame time with the meaſles, and the diſorder put on its moſt alarming form. Ellen diſpatched a meſſenger inſtantly to Lady Almeria, and ſhutting herſelf up in the apartment with the children, watched them with equal and unremitted ſolicitude. Before Lady Almeria arrived the little girl was apparently out of danger, but the boy continued in a ſtate of the greateſt hazard.

Ellen, who had not a thought that ſhe could ſpare from him, did not obſerve the almoſt undiſſembled indifference with which Sir William viewed the child's danger, and her ſorrows; but it ſtruck every body elſe. Lady Almeria conſidered it as a full confirmation of all that ſhe had been told: She had promiſed to inform Henry of the progreſs of the child's diſeaſe, and ſhe ſcrupled not to mention in the moſt explicit terms, all the obſervations that ſhe had made on Sir William's conduct.

Henry was almoſt driven to diſtraction with the idea of Ellen's ſufferings, and Sir William's cruelty, yet durſt he not attempt to alleviate the one, or to puniſh the other; he could only entreat Lady Almeria not to remit

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the frequency and particularity of her details, and he awaited the event in town with all the anxiety and perturbation that he might have felt had he been indeed the father of the child.

Not all the exertion of the beſt medical ſkill, not all poor Ellen's ſolicitous and unwearied care could prolong her darling's date on earth, or keep its ſpirit one moment from its native ſky :—It died !—And Ellen remained a motionleſs image of deſpair, by the ſide of the bed on which it had expired.

Sir William had been out in his grounds, and returning, entered the apartment to make his uſual cold inquiry, in his accuſtomed words of, "How go you on ?"

"It is all over !" ſaid Lady Almeria.

"Thank God !" ſaid Sir William, and ruſhed out of the room.

Ellen looked up, and inſtantly ſunk down ſenſeleſs, and to all appearance lifeleſs.

Lady Almeria's ſhrieks brought Sir William back. "You have murdered her—you have killed Ellen," ſaid ſhe.

No words can deſcribe Sir William's conſternation ; he hardly knew the force of the words that had eſcaped him, and the effect they had upon Ellen appeared incomprehenſible : But the ſight of her, pale and breathleſs before him, drove him almoſt to inſtant madneſs. He caught her in his arms, and eager to remove her from the chamber of death, carried her to her own apartment. There, while every method was uſed to reſtore her, he threw himſelf on his knees before her, and,

regardleſs of all preſent, earneſtly implored her forgiveneſs, upbraided himſelf as the moſt cruel and unjuſt of men, and promiſed never ceaſing love and confidence if ſhe would but live to bleſs him.

Ellen opened her eyes; but, as if the ſight of Sir William was baneful to her, ſhe put her hands before them and wept bitterly.

Sir William ordered every body to retire.

"No! no! no!" ſaid Ellen.

"Do you then hate me?" ſaid Sir William, "Dare you not truſt yourſelf with me?"

Theſe words brought Ellen to her recollection. "Do not talk ſo, Sir William; but I am very ill, I want aſſiſtance."

"I will aſſiſt you. I would give my life for yours, and do you refuſe to let me attend you?"

"Leave us," ſaid Ellen faintly.

"Oh! Sir William," ſaid ſhe when they were alone, "what mean thoſe words of love after you have given me ſuch a proof of your deadly hatred?"

"A proof of deadly hatred!——Oh! Ellen, how you wrong me, what ſenſe can you have put upon my words to make you think them words of hatred?"

Ellen wept but could not ſpeak.

"The ſubject is too delicate," continued Sir William, "to explain upon; but is it an unpardonable crime, when hope was extinct, to have been grateful that ſuffering was no more?"

Ellen was ſilent.

"Deareſt Ellen, ſay you miſunderſtood, that

that you are convinced; do not perſiſt in an error ſo injurious.'

"I cannot ſpeak, my heart is cruelly oppreſſed, but never need you dread injuſtice from me."

"Then, my deareſt love, look upon me; do not thus turn from me, as if the very ſight of me was hateful to you. Often have I given you cauſe of offence, never did I find you unforgiving. Now, when I would not offend you be not leſs kind."

"I would not think that there has been offence given; I would not think that there is room for forgiveneſs."

"Then in this embrace be all miſapprehenſion forgotten: Be aſſured, you cannot be grieved without my taking a part in your affliction."

"I will endeavour to believe it; but take it not unkindly if I wiſh to be alone, I am very greatly afflicted; I cannot now make uſe of the full powers of my mind; I cannot at this moment be all you wiſh me to be, or all I ought to be. Let me recollect myſelf, I hope ſoon to be reſigned to all the ill I am deſtined to ſuffer, and alive to all the good that is ſtill afforded me."

"May you conſider my love," ſaid Sir William, embracing her, "as the greateſt ſhare of that good, and as a proof you do ſo, do not baniſh me long from you."

Sir William then left her, and endeavoured to calm the diſturbance of his mind, by perſuading himſelf that he had given ſuch a ſenſe to the unkind words that had eſcaped him.

as would effectually remove from the mind of Ellen all apprehenſion of their real meaning.

Whatever were the ſuſpicions that had dictated theſe words, and whatever the impulſe to which he had yielded in uttering them, he was ſenſible there was a barbarity in their ſound, that no motive, and ſcarcely any offence could juſtify. He doubted not but Lady Almeria would repeat them, and he ſaw his character at ſtake. In perſuading Ellen that they were only the effuſion of compaſſion he knew he ſecured a warm advocate; and in the kindneſs of their intercourſe he ſaw a refutation of any cenſure that his unguardedneſs might have expoſed him to.

Theſe were the ſelfiſh motives upon which his preſent conduct was founded, but he was not without a very ſenſible compunction for what had paſſed, and had a very lively intereſt in the ſorrows of Ellen. He had lately accuſtomed himſelf to conſider her as rather injured than injuring, and in this light he felt for her a revival of his firſt paſſion, and mixed as it was with pity towards her, and reproach to himſelf, the expreſſions of it were more lively and tender than even in the firſt days of their marriage.

But Ellen's heart was no longer in a ſtate to receive pleaſure from the love of Sir William. No explanation that he could give to words ſo cruel and wounding, could do away the effect they had produced in her mind. Without fully underſtanding the feeling from whence they ſprung, ſhe felt them

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as the greateſt and moſt unprovoked unkindneſs he could have been guilty of: the careleſs indifference he had ſhewn through the whole of the poor baby's illneſs, now ruſhed upon her recollection, and ſhe found it impoſſible to believe that words ſo ſtrong had ariſen only from a ſudden impulſe of compaſſion to ſufferings to which he had ſo long appeared inſenſible; yet why Sir William ſhould rejoice in the death of his child, except becauſe it was the ſource of her pureſt delight, ſhe could not gueſs. She had often thought that he had conſidered the boy with jealouſy, as an object that had occupied that place in her heart which he alone ought to have poſſeſſed; but for a jealouſy ſo ſelfiſh and unjuſtifiable, with all her candour, ſhe could find no excuſe. A ſentiment of diſguſt and reſentment now therefore mingled with the deep grief of Ellen for the loſs of her child; nor could all her efforts to ſubdue it wholly ſucceed. But grief in this caſe did more for her than reaſon; ſo overwhelming was her affliction, that it overcame every other feeling, and had the cauſe of the offence been unconnected with the ſubject of her ſorrow it would have been inſtantly obliterated from her mind.

## CHAP. V.

'Oft' expectation fails, and moſt oft' there
'Where moſt it promiſes.'

SHAKESPEARE.

WHILE Ellen remained almoſt wholly abſorbed in grief, a circumſtance happened that broke in upon her affliction, and convinced her, that no ſtate could be wholly wretched that afforded the benevolent heart an opportunity of adminiſtering to the wants of others.

Her letters from Northumberland informed her, that the grandſon of her favorite protegée Deborah, a young man diſtinguiſhed for his intelligence, honeſty, and induſtry, had from ſome unavoidable misfortunes fallen into the greateſt diſtreſs, and that he, his wife, and two children were in jail. Charlotte, who wrote the hiſtory, deplored the utter impoſſibility of her father to afford any effectual aſſiſtance to ſo much undeſerved miſery, as the ſum neceſſary for that purpoſe was not ſhort of two hundred pounds, a ſum much too large for him to ſpare from the immediate wants of his own family.

Ellen's heart ſeemed to leap in her boſom, when ſhe read this account. Sir William had always

always continued his uſual allowance to her, and the little occaſion ſhe had for money for many months paſt, had made her rich. By anticipating a part of her next quarterage, which might be made eaſy by a little future economy, ſhe was able immediately to command two hundred pounds, and by the return of the poſt ſhe tranſmitted a draft upon Sir William's banker for that ſum.

It is needleſs to attempt explaining the joy and gratitude of the family, whoſe miſeries ſhe relieved; their joy however was not ſhort of her own, nor was her gratitude leſs when ſhe raiſed her thoughts to the Giver of all Good ——the giver of that good which includes all other, the giver of a good heart. This tranſaction ſhed a calm over the mind of Ellen, and contributed more to reſtoring her to peace than any gratification merely ſelfiſh could have done.

Lady Almeria had been but too faithful a detailer to the wretched Henry of the whole ſtory of the death of the child, and the conſequent ſorrows of Ellen, and he felt on the communication his ſufferings increaſe to ſo intolerable a degree, that he found it impoſſible to forbear ſome effort towards their alleviation. Yet when he conſidered that all his information came from Lady Almeria, and reflected upon her unfeeling character, and the talent ſhe had in exaggeration, he thought it prudent to judge with his own eyes, and determine by his own obſervation before he took any ſtep, the conſequence of

which might involve the conduct of Ellen as well as his own.

Ellen, from the extent of her grief, which took in the whole of her mind, except what she could spare to the calls of benevolence, and from the gentleness of her temper which forbade any sharpness of resentment, had been able to receive Sir William's attentions and solicitudes with such a degree of satisfaction and gratitude as seemed to speak to all lookers on, that perfect harmony was restored between them. Ellen had been also particularly softened towards Sir William by his generosity, unlike his usual character towards the grandson of poor Deborah. The circumstance of what Ellen had done for him came accidentally to his knowledge, and he was too acute not to perceive the favourable opportunity now in his power of doing more towards reinstating himself in Ellen's favor, than all his studied fondness to herself could ever have produced. He praised in the highest terms Ellen's benevolence, and by imitating, gave an irrefragable proof that he approved it. To the two hundred pounds he added another, as a means by which the young man might be enabled to enter the world again with some advantage.

On this occasion Ellen looked upon Sir William with an air of the sweetest complacency, and she once more said to herself, his heart will at length open to the true use of riches, our minds and our wishes will be in unison, and we shall be happy.

Sir

Sir William had explained the offenſive words to lady Almeria, in the ſame ſenſe that he had explained them to Ellen, and he ſought more and more by the marks of the fondeſt love, and moſt ſincere participation in her preſent affliction, to prove that they could juſtly bear no other ſenſe. Ellen ſeemed now to have forgiven, or at leaſt to have forgotten all that had paſſed; and Lady Almeria now ſaw nothing between Ellen and Sir William that could juſtify her former opinion, or the tales of Jenny.

She was not however willing, notwithſtanding thoſe favourable appearances, to ſuppoſe herſelf miſtaken, and while ſhe acknowledged in her letters to Henry the change that had taken place, ſhe ſcrupled not to impute it to the conſummate art of Sir William, who meant by this means to deceive her. For the truth of this conjecture ſhe appealed to the ſorrow in which Ellen was ſtill plunged, and which, ſhe ſaid, it was impoſſible to believe occaſioned by the death of a brat not four months old.

But Henry, who ſaw no ſuch impoſſibility, conſidering the peculiar circumſtances in which Ellen was placed, and feeling his hopes revive that her ſorrows did not wholly flow from ſo irremediable a cauſe as he had been taught to believe, thought this a proper time when Sir William was with her, and they appeared to be on perfect good terms with each other, to make uſe of his own obſervation to come at the truth if poſſible; for this purpoſe he came down to the Lodge, and the next morning after

ter his arrival walked over to Oakley. He had been told by Lady Almeria, that Ellen was ſo much indiſpoſed that ſhe ſeldom left her apartment 'till two o'clock in the day, and he had therefore choſen an hour for his firſt viſit in which he believed he ſhould only ſee Sir William.

He had croſſed a corner of the park and had entered through a part of the gardens which led him directly to a ſmall hall where ſervants always waited; but in going towards this hall he neceſſarily paſſed before the breakfaſt-room windows, which opened to the ground, and at which at that moment Lady Almeria was ſtanding. They ſaw each other, and Lady Almeria beckoning to him, ſaid, "So you are come? I thought you could not ſtay away, but you have good information, for I ſuppoſe you know Sir William is not at home?"

"Sir William not at home?" repeated Henry, "Why did you not tell me ſo before?"

"Oh, he went away two days ago, upon ſome ſudden buſineſs or other that ſignified not a farthing, and will ſtay away a week I believe: Well, ſit down, and I'll run and tell Ellen; I am ſure the ſight of you will do her good."

"Stay, I beg you will ſtay," ſaid he, "do you ſuppoſe, knowing all you do, that I would ſee Lady Ackland in the abſence of Sir William?"

"Why not? I tell you it will do her good, and it was an hundred to one but you had found

found her in this room. She is much better than ſhe was, and comes down to breakfaſt, but ſhe had a head-ach this morning, and ſo kept her chamber."

"I am happy ſhe did ſo: And now, Lady Almeria, if it be poſſible for you to keep a ſecret, promiſe me that you will not mention to Lady Ackland that I have been here; as ſome little indemnification for ſuch reſtraint, I give you leave to tell Sir William every circumſtance of my viſit."

"Tell Sir William indeed! No, I will never tell him any thing that I think can give him ſatisfaction. Bnt, in the name of common ſenſe (for as to high-flown heroics I do not pretend to underſtand them) pray tell me why you will not ſee Lady Ackland."

"If half what you have told me is authentic, I think you may anſwer that queſtion yourſelf; my viſit was to Sir William, not to Lady Ackland, and when Sir William returns I will repeat it. I have no objection to ſeeing Lady Ackland, but I will not ſee her apart from her huſband."

"But why not give yourſelf the merit of your mighty forbearance with Ellen?—Objection to ſeeing Lady Ackland indeed! I know you would give one of your eyes to ſee her with the other, why not tell her what hardſhips you impoſe upon yourſelf for her ſake?"

"Dear Lady Almeria, would you have me ſhew to Lady Ackland that I know Sir William is jealous? I hope in God this is a truth ſhe will always remain ignorant of. Have you

you not told me yourſelf, that even to you ſhe will never appear to ſee this; and ſhall I convince her that not only you, but that I am in poſſeſſion of the fatal ſecret? A ſecret ſhe wiſhes to conceal from all the world!"

"Why then did you not ſtay and ſee her, as you would do if you knew nothing of the matter?"

"And ſo expoſe her to the unjuſt ſuſpicions and unkind treatment of Sir William. Even you ſuppoſed I had received intelligence of his abſence, and do you think he will be leſs liable to fall into ſuch an error? When Sir William knows of my viſit, and knows I have not ſeen Lady Ackland, it will be impoſſible but that he ſhould believe, what is truth, that I came to ſee him, and not her."

"Well, I pretend to no great ſkill, either in matters of prudence, or in matters of ſentiment, but I'll engage for it I ſhould manage a jealous huſband better than either of you:—I ſhould go my own way; if it were agreeable to my mighty Lord ſo much the better for him; if the contrary, he would be ſoon weary of complaints that hurt nobody but himſelf——There, now you muſt ſee Ellen—that's her chamber door—I hear her foot on the ſtairs."

"Good morning then, and I entreat you do not ſay I have been here."

Henry darted out of the room, and to avoid the path that would have detained him for ſome time within ſight of the windows, turned haſtily

tily into a more private one, which led into a part of the pleaſure ground, that did not connect with that part of the park by which he had entered. After wandering about ſome little time, he found his way over a fence from which he regained the public road, and from thence his own houſe.

When here he reflected upon the eſcape he had, and upon the injury he might have cauſed Ellen, had he ſeen her in Sir William's abſence. Such a circumſtance would, he well knew, have carried to a jealous mind, conviction of a private correſpondence. He determined to learn forbearance for the future, and from henceforth to act as if the ſorrows and injuries of Ellen were indifferent to him. The evil that might have attended the gratification of his ſolicitude upon this ſubject, though he had guarded, as he thought, the maſk of it with every poſſible caution, fixed the pang of ſelf reproach in his heart.

"Deareſt Ellen," ſaid he to himſelf, "I am forbidden to contribute to your happineſs; but let no alleviation to my own miſery tempt me again to hazard an increaſe of yours."

Alas! if the poſſibility of increaſing the ſorrows of Ellen appeared thus inſupportable to the feeling and generous heart of Henry, what would have been his anguiſh had he been conſcious of the evils he had already prepared for her. Determined by theſe thoughts, Henry meaſured his ſteps back to London, and firmly reſolved, on no pretence whatever, again to attempt ſeeing either Sir William or Ellen.

Lady

Lady Almeria had a ſharp conteſt between her love of communication, and her pride, which was ſomewhat piqued by Henry's words, "If it be poſſible you can keep a ſecret." Her deſire to ſhow him that ſhe could, prevailed more than any motives of prudence or delicacy, or deſire of obliging him in inducing her to hold her tongue; but being fidgetting and reſtleſs under this reſtraint, ſhe dragged Ellen with her into the garden, and then ran away from her to look all around for the purpoſe of ſeeing if Henry was quite gone.

Ellen was returning ſlowly alone to the houſe, when ſhe ſaw, with ſome ſurpriſe, Sir William coming towards her; he was attended by a ſervant, whom ſhe heard him queſtioning very earneſtly, and with ſomething of diſpleaſure in his tone, whether there had been any viſitors in his abſence: On the man's ſtrenuouſly anſwering in the negative, he turned angrily from him, and ſeeing Ellen, ſtarted with evident marks of diſcompoſure. Ellen was not able to quicken her ſteps to meet Sir William, and ſo far from its appearing that Sir William haſtened to meet her, that ſhe thought for an inſtant that he would have turned another way. The next inſtant however he came forward, and joined her.

"You are much improved," ſaid he, in an unconciliating tone, "ſince I left you: I hear you come down to breakfaſt, and I ſee you walk in the garden."

"Yes," ſaid Ellen, taking hold of his arm, "but that giddy Lady Almeria has ran away from me, and I ſhould have found it difficult to

to have gained the houſe without ſome ſupport."

"You had ſupport when you left it I ſuppoſe?"

"Lady Almeria was with me, but ſhe has flown off upon ſome of her fluttering expeditions, I know not where, or why."

"Have you been alone ſince I left you?"

"Yes, and poor Lady Almeria is ſo tired I think ſhe would have left me to myſelf, if you had not returned to put an end to our tête-à-tête."

"She won't like the party better for my being of it."

"Indeed I believe nothing will detain her here much longer, ſhe thinks ſhe has already ſacrificed enough to charity, for ſhe declares ſhe is here wholly upon that ſcore now."

Here they reached the houſe, and Ellen was glad to repoſe herſelf upon a ſopha. Sir William ſtood ſilent before her, with his eyes fixed intently on her face, and loſt in deep thought.

Struck with his appearance and manners, ſo unlike all that he had lately ſhewn, it occurred ſuddenly to Ellen, that ſomething unpleaſant had happened during his abſence. "What's the matter?" ſaid ſhe kindly, "you are returned ſooner than you intended, nothing I hope is amiſs."

"It is plain I have returned ſooner than I was expected," ſaid Sir William, and went haſtily out of the room.

Ellen aſtoniſhed and alarmed, knew not what to think or conjecture; ſhe was ſure

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ſome new jealous fancy had taken poſſeſſion of him, but could not gueſs from whence it originated. Had ſhe known that he had ſeen Henry ſcrambling over the fence that divided the pleaſure ground from the road, the enigma would have been explained. This indeed was the caſe, hence his earneſt queſtions to the ſervants, hence his increaſed ſuſpicions on meeting Ellen in the garden, and hence that implacable deſire of vengeance that proved ſo fatal to Ellen.

## CHAP. VI.

"If ſhe be falſe, oh, then heav'n mocks itſelf.

SHAKESPEARE.

LADY ALMERIA returning to the houſe, learnt from Ellen the unexpected return of Sir William; and ſhe learnt it with much ſatisfaction; for being heartily tired with her reſidence at Oakley, ſhe was reſolved to ſeize the moment when Ellen had a companion to leave it; ſhe therefore replied, "Well then you'll want me no longer, and therefore I will return to town to-morrow, where I flatter myſelf many people want me.

"You will leave me," ſaid Ellen, with a deep ſigh, "you will leave me your little girl?"

"Moſt willingly, but I hope you won't think of ſtaying here, you'll never recover your ſpirits if you do; but if Almeria grows inconvenient to you, either ſend her to me in town, or let her maid take her down into Devonſhire. Lady Almeria then went to give ſome directions to her ſervants for her removal the next day; and Ellen diſpirited and occupied wholly with conjectures as to the cauſe of Sir William's diſcompoſure retired to her own room. Lady Almeria returned ſometime afterwards to the breakfaſt parlour, and it occurring

curring to her that it would be a good thing to apprize Henry of the arrival of Sir William, ſhe wrote him the following lines.

"Sir William returned this morning, you made your eſcape in the nick of time, the enemy would have been upon you in a moment; now, however, you may make your approaches in all due form, and with a decorum that will ſet ſuſpicion at defiance. I ſhall be gone to-morrow, ſo to all your other motives, you may add that of charity, for your viſits here: Perhaps the world will be kind enough to impute them wholly to that laudable principle. However, pray come, for poor Ellen will be moped to death if left wholly to the converſation of *caro ſpoſo*."

This note ſhe left open upon the table, while ſhe ran up ſtairs to countermand ſome directions ſhe had given to her maid; ſhe was not abſent ten minutes, but Sir William entering the room in her abſence, his eye was involuntarily caught by his own name, written in Lady Almeria's hand; no motive of honor, or delicacy, could at that moment have reſtrained him from the gratification of his curioſity:—He read—every word was a dagger to his heart—He ruſhed out of the room into the garden, with the fury of a mad man, impelled by a ſudden impulſe to ſeek Henry, and make him atone by his blood for the injury he could no longer doubt he had received from him.

A few moments however brought him to calmer reflection: His reſolution was previouſly taken, and taken upon what he thought a cer-

a certainty little ſhort of that which he had this moment received. But ſuch evidence as this brought conviction with it, and he felt ſomewhat like ſatisfaction, that acting upon ſure grounds, that would now be juſtice which might before have been cruelty. His victim, if a victim he made, he had always determined ſhould be Ellen; her criminality was, in his eyes, of a much deeper dye than Henry's; it was the complicated product of hypocriſy, infidelity, and treachery; he conſidered each action of her life ſince he became her huſband as marked with the moſt vicious duplicity, and he held himſelf acquitted to his own heart, for uſing the ſame means for the puniſhment of vice, which he believed had been purſued in the perpetration of it.

The preſent tumult of his mind, however, was too great to eſcape notice, if he were to ſubject himſelf to obſervation: He returned therefore to the houſe, and ſummoning his ſervant, complained of ſudden indiſpoſition, and went to bed.

Ellen was ſoon informed that Sir William was not well, and going to his chamber, ſaw his inflamed eye, and felt his burning hand, with a truly tender compaſſion; ſhe entreated he would ſend inſtantly for a phyſician, and ſeating herſelf by his bed-ſide, declared her intention of watching by him 'till the phyſician arrived. Sir William oppoſed this reſolution ſo ſtrenuouſly, and with ſomewhat of ſuch unkind warmth, that Ellen, fearing to be of more diſſervice by oppoſition, than of uſe by her attendance, at length yielded, and

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ſhe yielded the more willingly as Sir William poſitively aſſerted that his illneſs, only aroſe from having rode faſt in a hot ſun, and he averred that a few hours ſleep, (and he affected to feel himſelf drowſy) would entirely remove all his complaints.

Ellen was not, however, ſo well ſatisfied with Sir William's medical ſkill, as to rely wholly either upon his account of the cauſe of his illneſs, or in his confidence in its cure; ſhe therefore ſent for a phyſician, and frequently viſited the door of Sir William's apartment, to ſatisfy herſelf, if ſhe could, whether he ſlept or not. She was ſoon convinced that he did not ſleep, being ſure that ſhe heard him up, and walking about his room; ſhe gently tried the lock of the door, but finding it faſtened, did not venture to puſh her intruſion farther.

This circumſtance fixed the moſt uneaſy ſolicitude on her mind: The humour in which Sir William had appeared on his return home, and which, when he complained of illneſs, ſhe had perſuaded herſelf to attribute wholly to that cauſe, ſhe now began to conſider more as a cauſe itſelf; and to fear, that if there really were any indiſpoſition, it was brought on by diſcompoſure of mind: But ſhe apprehended that illneſs was indeed a pretence, and that Sir William meant by it to withdraw himſelf from all obſervation, without exciting any curioſity by doing ſo. In any caſe no good could be produced by her forcing herſelf upon him againſt his will. If he were really ill, ſhe could not doubt but that he would do all

all that was neceſſary in ſuch a caſe, and if any thing had ariſen to vex him, ſhe thought her influence to calm his mind would be exerted with the moſt hope of ſucceſs, when he appeared more willing to liſten to her. She therefore retired to her own room, and there waited in anxious ſuſpence 'till Sir William's bell ſhould give her a pretence again to appear in his apartment.

While theſe things were paſſing, Lady Almeria had returned to the breakfaſt-room, had ſealed her note, and diſpatched it to the Lodge, by the ſervant whom ſhe was ſending to the neighbouring town, for poſt horſes for her carriage the next day. When ſhe was told Sir William was ill, ſhe was ſomewhat alarmed, leſt ſhe ſhould be again involved in the cares of charity, and that his illneſs ſhould be of ſuch a nature as would not allow her, with decency, to leave Ellen while it continued; ſhe went to Lady Ackland's apartment, to make all the inquiries poſſible, but could learn nothing more that was ſatisfactory.

In the mean time the phyſician arrived, and Ellen deſired he might be ſhewn immediately to Sir William; the ſervant however informed her that he had received the moſt poſitive commands from his maſter, not to enter his room until called for, and that he durſt not diſobey.

As Ellen's fears on the account of illneſs had very much ſubſided, ſhe yielded to the ſervant's remonſtrance, and affected to ſuppoſe that Sir William ſlept, and that ſleep would be his certain cure. In her ſtolen viſits

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to the door, ſhe had obſerved all was quiet, and began to hope that the paroxyſm of ill humour, which ſhe was induced to think was the whole of the caſe, was going off.

About eight in the evening Sir William rang his bell: His ſervant found him up, and on being told that Doctor Wilſon was in the houſe, he readily admitted both him and Ellen. With a kind of bitter raillery he treated her wife-like fears, that had induced her to trouble Doctor Wilſon to ride ten miles in a hot day, to viſit a man who had gone to bed to ſleep off a head-ach, and ſtretching out his hand to the phyſician, "Feel, Sir," ſaid he, "if that pulſe does not beat healthfully?"

Doctor Wilſon affirmed it did, and aſſured Ellen ſhe need have no farther apprehenſion, for that Sir William had known how to cure himſelf."

Ellen convinced that her ſuſpicions as to the non-exiſtence of any complaint, were perfectly well founded, now withdrew, and informed Lady Almeria that Sir William had ſlept off all his complaints, and that Doctor Wilſon ſaid he was quite well.

"Thank God!" ſaid Lady Almeria.

Ellen could not help ſmiling. "I am ſure Sir William is much obliged to you for the intereſt you take in his health!" ſaid ſhe.

"Piſh!—no—that's not quite the thing; but you know I have fixed to go to town tomorrow, and I could not have gone and left Sir William ill, and you ſo drooping."

Ellen ſhook her head, and moralized a little

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to herſelf on the good and ill that attended a diſpoſition ſo thoroughly ſelfiſh.

Sir William appeared both at ſupper and at breakfaſt next morning, but it happened that he was never an inſtant with Lady Almeria apart from Ellen, and if he had been ſo, it is probable ſhe would not have mentioned the viſit Henry had made, both from the reaſon ſhe had given of never willingly contributing to the ſatisfaction of Sir William, and the feeling no particular ſtimulus to relate that which had nothing out of the common way to recommend it, and which contained no miſchief in it.

When ſhe ſhook hands at parting with Ellen, "Pray endeavour to recover your ſpirits," ſaid ſhe, "but you ought to go ſome where, you'll never be yourſelf again if you ſtay here."

"I think," ſaid Sir William, after Lady Almeria was gone, "I think for *once* Lady Almeria gives good advice; I have been thinking of the ſame thing: What ſay you to an expedition for ſome little time?"

"I will accompany you any where willingly," ſaid Ellen, her heart beating with the hope that Groby Manor would be the place thought of.

"Your health, your ſpirits require ſome change of ſcene," returned Sir William, "our new-born happineſs (hurryingly and with a clouded brow he ſpoke it) requires nurture: In a diſtant reſidence, in a foreign country, I hope we ſhould be able to re-eſtabliſh the one

and ſecure the other: What ſay you to going abroad for a few months?"

The thought of Northumberland croſſed Ellen's mind, and prevented that promptneſs of compliance with which ſhe uſually met any propoſal from Sir William, heſitatingly replied, "I can have no objection, provided I can viſit Groby Manor before I go."

"Why viſit Groby Manor? That would derange all my plans, I want to be gone immediately."

"You do not mean then to be abſent very long I ſuppoſe?"

"Not very long; I ſhould propoſe returning in ſomething leſs than a twelvemonth."

"A twelvemonth!" repeated Ellen, "and do you not call that long?"

"I think a leſs time will not anſwer any of the purpoſes for which we go, and as I do not wiſh to ſpend any time in London for the next year and half, I would not return to England 'till next June."

"If our abſence is to be ſo long, you can have no objection to my viſiting Groby Manor before we ſet out. It is now a year and a half ſince I ſaw any of its dear inhabitants."

"When," ſaid Sir William peeviſhly, "ſhall I propoſe any thing to which you will give a ready aſſent?"

"You cannot wonder," returned Ellen mildly, "that I do not willingly conſent to add another twelvemonth to the ſeparation which has already taken place between me and ſome of thoſe whom I beſt love, and who

who beſt love me; my father in particular I know longs to ſee me."

"I ſhould have no objection to your going into Northumberland, but the thing is impoſſible. Let me ſee—this is Wedneſday, by Monday ſe'nnight I hope to be landed in Holland."

"By Monday ſe'nnight! Indeed I am very ſorry to hear it, for, pardon me if I ſay, I fear my father will take it very unkindly if I leave England for ſo long a time without ſeeing him."

"You may eaſily exonerate yourſelf from the charge of unkindneſs; lay every thing upon the cruelty and tyranny of your huſband, and then you will not only be excuſed but pitied."

"Alas! if we carry ſuch thoughts as theſe abroad with us, change of place will add little to our happineſs."

"Why then do you give reaſon for them? In no one inſtance ſince we were married have you been willing to ſacrifice the feelings of others to my wiſhes."

"Indeed! this then ſhall be an inſtance: I am ready to quit England with you if you chooſe it."

"And do you ſay this from your heart?"

"From my heart, and with my heart. I had hoped your wiſhes would never have been in competition with the duties that I owe my father, but ſince it is ſo, your wiſhes ſhall have the place they ought to have."

"How inexplicable, how impenetrable is the heart of a woman!" exclaimed Sir William,

"Indeed, my dear Sir William, you make the myſtery you ſeem to wonder at; ſurely there is not a leaf in the whole book of nature ſooner read than that of my heart."

"Do not I know, do not I know———" then haſtily checking himſelf, "well, I will put you to the teſt." Then opening a book of maps, "Let us trace our intended route; we will have none of the beaten road of France and Italy, let us begin with the North of Europe: My ſiſter's marriage with a Saxon nobleman has occaſioned me at times to reſide ſo much in the Northern part of Germany, that I feel myſelf at home there, and ſome of the happieſt hours I ever knew were ſpent at Dreſden—We will go to Dreſden, I will introduce you to my ſiſter—We will go firſt to the Hague, from thence we may ſee every thing that the United Provinces have worthy of obſervation; I will ſhew you Hanover, Brunſwick, Hamburg, you ſhall viſit the ſhores of the Baltic, we will then turn to Berlin, there we may ſpend ſome time, but we will winter at Dreſden."

"And by what route ſhall we come home?" aſked Ellen.

"Oh, I will travel you through Bohemia to Vienna, perhaps enter Italy; but there are ſcenes with which I think you would be particularly pleaſed, in the Archbiſhoprick of Saltzburg."

"I think I ſhould like to go from Vienna to Venice," ſaid Ellen, "from thence thro' the Tyrol to Switzerland; I ſhould be ſorry to leave Switzerland out of our tour; but we

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ſeem to be furniſhing materials for a very long abſence."

"We could eaſily paſs through a much greater extent of country, than we have marked out, in much leſs time than we think of being abſent."

"Yes, paſs through it, but that is not the manner in which we ſhould like to ſee it."

"Well, this is only a rough ſketch of what we may do; we muſt model it as circumſtances and inclination may ariſe."

"But do you really deſign to leave England next week? Is it poſſible we ſhould do ſo? Muſt we not have a travelling carriage built? And your own affairs—can you put them into a proper ſtate in ſo ſhort an interval, to be left for ſo long a period?"

"All this may be managed, give yourſelf no trouble about the matter, make what arrangements you may find neceſſary as ſpeedily as poſſible, and be aſſured I ſhall be ready to accompany you to town in leſs than a week in our way to Harwich."

Sir William then left her, and with an air as if he would immediately begin his preparations; and Ellen retired to her room with a mind extremely diſtreſſed and embarraſſed by the conſideration of all that had paſſed ſince the preceding morning. She could not help connecting this ſudden journey with the diſcontent and diſturbance Sir William had manifeſted the day before; but all her reaſoning and all her penetration were unequal to the diſcovery of the link that was between them.

From the habit, which had ariſen from principle, that Ellen had acquired, of always looking on the bright ſide of events, and of opening her mind to all the good it was poſſible they could produce, ſhe was enabled at this moment to ſubdue a crowd of painful apprehenſions, and indiſtinct fears, that aroſe in her thoughts; and ſhe endeavoured to gather from ſome words that had fallen from Sir William, that his preſent conduct was deſigned as the final teſt of her integrity and affection, and ſhe flattered herſelf that a prudent management on her part would fix the content of her future life upon a tolerably firm baſis.

It was this thought that had made her ſo readily yield her conſent, and reaſonable deſire of ſeeing her family before her departure, to the needleſs hurry, as it appeared to her, and capricious wiſhes of Sir William; and it was this thought that inſpired her with fortitude to conceal the bitter regret that ſhe felt in conſequence of this ſacrifice: She was reſolved that Sir William ſhould ſee on her part nothing but good humour and alacrity, and ſhe hoped that in the cheerfulneſs with which ſhe quitted every other attachment to accompany him, he would find a full refutation to thoſe unjuſt ſuſpicions that had hitherto deſtroyed her peace, together with his own.

CHAP.

## CHAP. VII.

" Ne fune intorto crederò che ſtringa
" Soma così, nè così leguo chiodo,
" Come la fè, che una bella alma cinga
" Del ſuo tenace, indiſſolubil nodo.
" Ne dagli antichi par, che ſi dipinga
" La ſanta fè veſtita in altro modo,
" Che d'un Vel bianco, che la copra tutta,
" Ch' un ſol punto, un Sol neo la puo far brutta "

ARIOSTO.

THERE is no virtue which ſo immediately produces its own reward, as a vigorous exertion of the mind, ariſing from a purity of principle.

Ellen ſoon felt that cheerfulneſs and that alacrity which ſhe had judged it proper to aſſume; ſhe wrote without delay to her father, informing him of the journey ſhe was about to undertake. But ſoftening the apparent harſhneſs of their declining to viſit Northumberland before they ſet out, by repreſenting that Sir William's haſte to be abroad aroſe from his ſolicitude on her account, which would not ſuffer him to liſten to any delay: ſhe intimated a very probable hope, that her abſence would be much ſhorter than was at preſent talked of; ſhe ſuggeſted that it would depend upon her perfect reſtoration to health, and as ſhe could truly ſay that all remains of

indiſpoſition were even now trifling, ſhe dwelt upon the almoſt certainty that they muſt meet again early in the ſpring. She endeavoured, by an appearance of cheerfulneſs and ſatisfaction, to leave no doubt upon the mind of her father, that the journey met fully with her concurrence, and ſhe promiſed the moſt conſtant and minute details of all ſhe ſhould ſee or hear.

The letter, however kindly deſigned, or artfully framed, by no means anſwered the purpoſe for which it was written. Mr. Mordaunt was ſtruck by the glaring inconſiſtency of the degree of indiſpoſition that required ſo precipitate a removal into another country, and the choice that had been made of the country to which the invalid was to be removed. The climate of the northern part of Germany ſeemed ill calculated for the recovery of a conſtitution debilitated by ſickneſs and ſorrow.

Ellen had indeed mentioned, as a concurring motive for her journey, that from change of ſcene was hoped a relief to her ſpirits, as well as from a change of climate to her health. But Mr. Mordaunt well knew, that if left to her own choice, Ellen would have ſought every relief that ſhe could hope for her mind in Northumberland, rather than elſewhere; and the cheerfulneſs which ſhe had aſſumed in her manner of writing, with the pleaſure ſhe affected to take in the proſpects before her, ſeemed to ſay that ſhe did not ſtand in need of much aſſiſtance in this way.

Theſe

Theſe reflections perplexed and diſturbed Mr. Mordaunt, and he reſolved to ſee Ellen before her departure; he wrote accordingly to inform her of his intention, but that he might not delay for a moment a journey upon which Ellen had deſcribed Sir William as ſo earneſtly bent, he told her that he ſhould immediately proceed to town, where he hoped he ſhould be time enough to catch them for a few hours as they paſſed through it; he having underſtood from Ellen that Sir William did not mean to make even a day's ſtay in the metropolis. But Sir William's haſte defeated Mr. Mordaunt's kind purpoſe, and though, had he known the fears and ſuſpicions that had found their way into Mr. Mordaunt's mind, he would willingly have ſpared not one day only, but ſeveral days for the purpoſe of removing them, yet it not having occurred to him that Mr. Mordaunt would not reſt ſatisfied with Ellen's repreſentation of the matter, he was not aware that there were either fears or ſuſpicions to remove.

On the very day that Ellen's letter arrived at Groby Manor, ſhe and Sir William left Oakley for London: Contrary to the firſt plan, they paſſed two nights and a day there, but purſuing their journey the day following with diligence, they had ſailed from Harwich before Mr. Mordaunt reached town.

The circumſtance that had detained Ellen a whole day in town was the ſudden marriage of her own maid. Jenny had been courted by a young man, ſon to one of Sir William's principal tenants; it had been agreed that the

match was not to take place until the young man could take a farm of his own, and this they had conſidered as ſomewhat a diſtant proſpect: But the day after Sir William had determined upon the plan of going abroad, his ſteward had offered a farm to Thomas upon ſuch advantageous terms, that nothing was wanting but the conſent of Jenny to become his wife, to make him one of the moſt contented of men. Jenny objected to the impoſſibility of leaving her Lady ſo ſuddenly, and ſo much to her inconvenience; but her ſcruples were ſoon overcome by the rhetoric of Thomas, and ſhe mentioned, tho' with ſome reluctance, to Ellen, how unlucky it was that ſhe was obliged juſt then to go into foreign parts, when if ſhe had ſtayed at home ſhe might have been married to Thomas.

Ellen eaſily underſtood her, and as no perſonal inconvenience ever cauſed her to heſitate when the happineſs of others depended upon her deciſion, ſhe cheered Jenny with a ready and kind conſent to her remaining in England, and by aſſuring her, that ſhe did not apprehend any unpleaſantneſs to herſelf in conſequence of her doing ſo.

Sir William ſeemed highly pleaſed with Ellen's diſintereſtedneſs on this occaſion, and gratified both the miſtreſs and the maid, by making Jenny a very handſome nuptial preſent.

Ellen received this act of Sir William as a farther proof, that his manner of thinking was becoming more congenial to her own. Of ſervants he generally ſpoke as of creatures of a lower

lower order of beings, and who were bound, if well paid, to conſider themſelves without murmuring, as the ſlaves of caprice and the victims of tyranny. She had feared he would have inveighed at the ingratitude and unfeelingneſs of Jenny, and ſhe had prepared ſeveral mollifying arguments to make him ſubmit quietly to the inconvenience her ſudden deſertion muſt occaſion; ſhe was much delighted to find him in ſo different a diſpoſition, and readily acceded to his requeſt, that as ſhe had now no Engliſh ſervant, to whoſe ſervices ſhe had been accuſtomed, ſhe would ſupply Jenny's place with a foreign one, which he aſſured her ſhe would find much more convenient during her ſojourn abroad.

Ellen had written to Lady Almeria to deſire ſhe would find her ſome perſon who could ſupply the preſent emergency, and the choice ſhe had been obliged to make between ſeveral candidates had detained her in town. Having fixed upon the leaſt exceptionable, ſhe had diſmiſſed Jenny, and with her new attendant had proceeded on her journey.

Nothing could exceed Mr. Mordaunt's diſappointment, when on his arrival in town, he found Ellen had left it; but he had ſuch comfortable aſſurances both from Lady Almeria and his ſon, of the ſtate of her health, and the eaſe and apparent contentment of her mind, that he became perfectly ſatisfied in every reſpect but that of having miſſed the pleaſure of ſeeing her. He imputed the unneceſſary hurry which had accompanied their departure wholly to the ſolicitude of Sir William,

to re-eſtabliſh the health of Ellen, a little aided by the pleaſure that it was reaſonable to ſuppoſe he would feel in returning to the ſcenes and habits of foreign courts, as it was very apparent that thoſe of his native country, were not nearly ſo pleaſing to him.

Mr. Mordaunt returned to Northumberland well enabled by the ſatisfaction his own mind had received, to tranquillize the anxious apprehenſions of Ellen's friends and well wiſhers, who were, indeed, numerous as her acquaintance, with only the exception perhaps of her own mother.

Mrs. Mordaunt however had long ceaſed to feel that rancour of diſlike which for many years had occaſioned ſo much miſery to Ellen: Her marriage had removed her from the ſituation where her ſuperior qualities had given Mrs. Mordaunt perpetual umbrage; and the power that this marriage had given Ellen of gratifying many of her mother's wiſhes, had in ſome degree conciliated her affections—— affections that never yielded but to the voice of ſelfiſhneſs. Ellen had taken care to ſupply her conſtantly with ſome new faſhionable article of dreſs or furniture; ſhe had written her every faſhionable anecdote ſhe could collect, and had furniſhed her with every new play, or political pamphlet which made the converſation of the day; and which, from being early communicated to Mrs. Mordaunt, enabled her to ſupport that ſuperiority over her country neighbours, in which all the deſires of her ſtill exiſting vanity ſeemed now to center: Mortification too had humbled her, and though

it

it had not corrected the faults of her temper, it had made her more careful to conceal them. The conſtant ſight of her eldeſt and favourite daughter, who, with her two children drew their ſcanty ſupport, and to the inconvenience of the family, wholly from Mr. Mordaunt, was ſuch an undeniable proof of the fatal conſequences of her misjudging pride and vanity, as compelled her to appear to adjure the principle that had led to ſuch fatal miſtakes; ſhe no longer dared to expreſs a deſire to rule in a family, every individual of which ſuffered in one way or other from her once unbounded ſway. A never intermitting diſcontent preyed upon her heart, and undermined her conſtitution. The marriage of her ſon with Lady Almeria, from which ſhe had hoped to have derived ſo much ſatisfaction and conſequence, yielded her neither one nor the other.

Lady Almeria ſhewed her the moſt pointed diſreſpect, never condeſcended to viſit her, or invited her daughter to partake with her in the amuſements of her country houſe, or the gaieties of a London life. The unwiſe and unjuſtifiable partiality ſhe had manifeſted towards her ſon, he repaid, rather as if he conſidered the effect than the motive: No conſideration for her maternal tenderneſs ſoftened with him the cenſure which her character ſo well juſtified, and he by turns ridiculed and diſregarded her.

From Mr. Mordaunt however ſhe continued to receive every mark of conſideration and kindneſs, and as her increaſing ill health ſoftened his heart towards her more and more, all

paſt

paſt offences were by degrees forgotten by him, and ſomething like his firſt love began to revive in his heart.

From the contemplation of a character ſo ſelfiſh as Mrs. Mordaunt's, it is relief to turn the mind to that of Henry's.

Stunned as he was at the firſt intelligence of Ellen's journey to the continent, and by the certainty that ſhe was thus removed from his ſight and obſervation, yet when he learnt from Lady Almeria her improved health, and apparently recovered eaſe of mind, he found ample compenſation for every ſelfiſh pang, in the hope that ſhe was now about to reap the reward of a virtue and ſtrength of mind which had proved itſelf ſuperior to all the buffetings and croſſes of fortune. In the progreſs, and event, as he hoped it would prove, of her trials, he acknowledged the force of that principle of the mind, which makes the inviolable preſervation of a once vowed duty the rule for conduct, and the ſtandard of happineſs.

Ellen will purſue, thought he, her path of rectitude in foreign climes, far, far diſtant it is true from me, but if I am enabled to tread the line marked out for me, with an equally ſteady foot, then, in ſpite of preſent diſtance, and probably future ſeparation, we ſhall meet at laſt—meet where no decorum, no unjuſt ſuſpicions, no unworthy fear will reſtrain the pleaſures of our intercourſe; we ſhall meet where we ſhall be allowably dear to each other through a long and happy eternity.

CHAP.

## CHAP. VIII.

"Happy the man who ſees a God employ'd
"In all the good and ill that chequer life:"

COWPER.

WHILE with theſe kind thoughts and flattering hopes the Engliſh friends of Ellen endeavoured to conſole themſelves for her abſence, ſhe was purſuing her route abroad with much leſs ſatisfaction than ſhe had promiſed herſelf.

The haſte with which ſhe had quitted England had occaſioned that every hour from the moment when the ſcheme was firſt ſuggeſted to that in which it had taken place, ſhould be wholly occupied with preparations for the journey, and ſhe had had little leiſure or opportunity to attend to the occupations of Sir William, who was equally engaged with herſelf. In the little communication ſhe had with him in any ſubject apart from the one that ſo mutually employed their thoughts, ſhe had had reaſon to believe him ſatisfied with her, and thought his ſatisfaction was not accompanied by the gaiety that it uſed to be, before any unkindneſs had ariſen between them, yet it appeared of that genuine kind which promiſed continuance and increaſe.

Ellen,

Ellen, however, ſoon began to fear, that her willingneſs to believe the beſt had deceived her.

A profound gravity, almoſt a gloom, ſeemed to have pervaded the mind of Sir William; he treated her with an auſtere coldneſs, totally different from any thing ſhe had hitherto ſeen in him; and as the burſts of paſſion and ſallies of ill humour ſhe had before been expoſed to, appeared the reſult of ſudden and irreſiſtible ſuſpicion, and had therefore ſubſided as the ſuſpicion vaniſhed; the arbitrary ſeverity that he now aſſumed towards her, ſeemed as if it could only be juſtified by a conviction of her depravity. It was the lordly tone of a deſpotic huſband, that he now took upon him, and he extended his privileges to the regulating the moſt trifling articles of her economy: Her own ſervant appeared to be particularly the object of his caprice, repeatedly Ellen was obliged to change her attendant, and every ſucceeding one ſeemed but the more the object of Sir William's diſlike.

Ellen's correſpondence with her Engliſh friends was more than every thing elſe a cauſe of offence to Sir William; he reproached her continually, that though in perſon ſhe had accompanied him abroad, her thonghts, her wiſhes, and her affections were in England; he ſeemed to regard every packet ſhe received with ſuſpicion, and ſometimes ſcrupled not to hint that they ſhould never be happy together until ſhe broke off all intercourſe with every one but himſelf.

Ellen

Ellen turned a deaf ear to all ſuch inſinuation; nothing ſhe was reſolved ſhould induce her to make ſuch a ſacrifice of her duty, nor any thing but force compel her to it. "All the affections in a good heart, would ſhe ſometimes ſay, are ſo cloſely entwined, that the one cannot be deſtroyed without the deſtruction of the others. If I did not love my parents, my ſiſters, and my friends, I could not love you."

Sir William underſtood nothing of this, and as he had given up the hope of being beloved by Ellen, his preſent unkindneſs was rather the reſult of ill humour, than the effect of jealouſy. Of the guilt of Ellen he had no doubt; the readineſs with which ſhe had concurred in his ſcheme for leaving England, the cheerfulneſs and good humour which had accompanied this concurrence, he conſidered all as parts of that maſs of intended hypocriſy that he believed had pervaded her whole conduct, from the firſt hour of their marriage—an hypocriſy that ſwelled her guilt in his apprehenſion beyond all bounds, and excited in his breaſt a proportionate reſentment: He had been willing to appear duped by it while it could any ways further his own purpoſes, but he was determined to puniſh it by every act of unkindneſs and provocation that an irritated and revengeful mind could ſuggeſt.

In a more generous and candid diſpoſition than Sir William's, the conciliating and affectionate manners of Ellen, with the ingenuous frankneſs of her ſentiments, muſt have produced different effects; they muſt have induced

induced a doubt of the ſtrongeſt appearances that indicated guilt in her, they muſt have led to explanation and acquittal; or at leaſt they muſt have ſuſpended condemnation, and withheld the arm of chaſtiſement.

But Sir William's reſolution was taken; nothing could now divert him from his purpoſe. It is true, had he been entirely maſter of himſelf, he would, until the moment of putting it into execution have concealed all deſire of vengeance; but the ill paſſions rankling in his heart broke out in ſpite of every effort to the contrary, into paroxyſms of tyranny and ill humour, and poor Ellen was the victim of them all.

In theſe circumſtances it is not to be wondered at, if Ellen placed her moſt fervent wiſhes on a return to England, or that ſhe found little real ſatisfaction from the varying objects that occurred; but ſtill Ellen's diſpoſition and principle of making the beſt of every thing did not forſake her. Her perfect good ſenſe directed her to the beſt means for attaining this end; it taught her to keep her own paſſions under controul, it repreſſed the tyranny of imagination, it enabled her to balance the real good and evil of her ſituation, and it ſhewed her that in the ſcale of human miſeries there were more above than below her. The circumſtances of every day ſeemed however to change this proportion.

The preſſure of Sir William's ill humour became ſo perpetual that Ellen, with all her patience and ingenuity, could ſcarcely contrive to eſcape one moment its weight; ſhe hardly knew

knew how to extract one drop of comfort from any reflection that her preſent ſituation or future proſpects afforded.

She had nearly loſt all hope that any conduct of hers could meliorate the diſpoſition of Sir William, and ſhe was farther confirmed in this hopeleſneſs by conſidering that his preſent unkindneſs could not be the fruits of any ſuſpicion ariſing from the events of the paſſing hour. She was ſeparated from all who were dear to her—ſhe was alone with Sir William in a world where there did not exiſt an individual who engaged her attention, or intereſted her affections, what then could he ſuſpect? what then could he fear? It was not poſſible that the events of the preſent time ſhould excite either fears or ſuſpicions, this ill treatment therefore ſhe could only impute to a deep reſentment for former imagined offences, to eſtranged affections, and to natural temper, evils hopeleſs of cure.

Mild reaſonings, cheerful tenderneſs, affectionate attention, and hitherto unwearied patience, ſhe had tried in vain; ſhe knew of no other remedies, and reſigning hope, ſhe endeavoured to arm herſelf with a double ſtock of fortitude, and thus ſtrove to ſupport with calmneſs and dignity the miſeries of a deſtiny ſhe knew not how to eſcape.

She could hope little from time, except as the diſſolver of that union which as long as it laſted ſhe was now convinced muſt be a ſource of unallayed affliction to her: But it was not in Ellen's nature, even in wiſh, to eſtabliſh her happineſs on the death of a fel-

low

low creature, nor in her chaſtened and religious mind, to deſire to accelerate to herſelf ſo awful a period; ſhe was deſirous in this, as in every other particular, to refer herſelf wholly and without reſerve to the diſpoſal of a being, on whoſe wiſdom and goodneſs ſhe had the moſt profound and unſhaken reliance. She left events to his care, who in ſuperintending an univerſe withdraws not his attention for an inſtant from the ſmalleſt atom of which it is compoſed; and bent her ſolicitude undivided to the right conduct of that part allotted to her, and on the performance of which depended a happineſs or miſery, as unlimited in degree as duration.

Ellen judging it expedient to avoid, if poſſible, all *ſelf commiſeration*, allowed herſelf little leiſure for reflecting upon her chagrins, ſhe contrived to be almoſt wholly occupied by the variety of perſons and things that their continual journeyings threw in her way, and as her general knowledge and the cultivation of her mind fitted her to enjoy the beſt converſation, and ſupplied her with obſervations and reflections upon every ſubject of curioſity that occurred either in nature or art, however ſhe might be deprived of happineſs, ſhe was by no means deſtitute of a very intereſting amuſement.

She never yielded to the ſupineneſs and langour which from the hopeleſſneſs of her ſorrow would ſometimes invade her mind; ſhe conſidered it as a ſignal to rekindle her activity, and to double her efforts towards procuring occupation.

They

They moved from place to place, according to the will and caprice of Sir William, and having conſumed ſome months in viſiting ſeveral of the Northern Courts of Germany, on the ſhores of the Baltic, and in a ſhort reſidence at Berlin, they found themſelves towards the end of December ſettled in a pleaſant houſe on the banks of the Elbè.

Ellen was, on her firſt arrival at Dreſden, introduced to Sir William's ſiſter; ſhe found her perfectly well bred, and highly accompliſhed, aſſiduous to render her all the little offices and attentions that politeneſs required, but apparently without a wiſh to cultivate any intimacy with her, beyond what common civility demanded. There ſeemed to be little attraction between their characters: Madam Teſchen had been ſo long abſent from her country, that England had no place in her affections—her ſentiments and her inclinations were German, and the evident diſregard and coldneſs with which Sir William treated Ellen, muſt unavoidably give her an unfavorable idea of her character, that it could not be expected in the kind of intercourſe that took place between them Ellen would be able to deſtroy.

CHAP.

## CHAP. IX.

" Patience herſelf, what Goddeſs e'er ſhe be,
" Does leſſer blench at ſufferance than ſhe does."

SHAKESPEARE.

ELLEN indeed ſoon found that neither with Madam Teſchen or any one elſe was it Sir William's wiſh that ſhe ſhould aſſociate, he ſeemed unwilling that ſhe ſhould be known, or that ſhe ſhould have it in her power to make herſelf friends.

After ſhe had been introduced at court, and into all ſuch houſes as Sir William had been formerly acquainted with, and after ſhe had ſeen all that the place afforded worthy of curioſity, Sir William made it appear very evidently, that he was never ſo well pleaſed with her, as when ſhe remained ſhut up in her own habitation.

This deſire of Sir William's to ſeclude her from all ſociety, agreed much better with her inclinations than her prudence. Sir William was ſeldom at home, and thus left to herſelf, and deprived of the means of indulging the active propenſities of her mind, or the benevolent diſpoſitions of her heart, ſhe found no intereſt in the common occupation which her books or her works afforded, ſufficiently powerful at all times to ſuſpend the querulouſneſs of regret, or the anticipation of fear.

It

It became abſolutely neceſſary to find ſome employment, which from its novelty might engage her whole attention. In this dilemma the advantage that would accrue from learning the German tongue occurred to her; hitherto ſhe had never continued long enough in any one place to attempt it, but ſhe had now more than ſufficient leiſure: It had been repreſented to her as extremely difficult, but this was rather an inducement to her to attempt to learn it at this time, than any diſcouragement. Whatever would call for the greateſt exertion of her faculties, and demand the largeſt ſhare of her attention, would anſwer her preſent purpoſe in ſeeking employment, the beſt; ſhe therefore reſolved to learn German, and ſhe hoped in the labours of her underſtanding to forget the ſorrows of her heart. She entered therefore upon her taſk with avidity, her maſter attended her every day, and the eagerneſs with which ſhe bent her whole mind to the buſineſs, with her natural talents, ſoon convinced her that the difficulties of the language had been exaggerated; ſhe was not however diſappointed in the main end, the newneſs of the purſuit intereſted her, it filled her time, and it filled her thoughts, it prevented her thinking of herſelf; —employment (thought ſhe) is the great ſecret of contentment.

She had been thus buſied about ten days, when Sir William, whom ſhe ſeldom ſawin the courſe of the day for more than a few minutes at a time, and who knew nothing of her

her new employment, unexpectedly entered her apartment.

He aſked in Engliſh, angrily and eagerly, what ſhe was about.

"I am learning German," ſaid Ellen with a ſmile.

"And do you not know languages enough?" returned he rudely, "what affectation is this of the love of ſtudy?"

Ellen doubted whether ſhe heard him aright: Amongſt all the foibles of Sir William's character, he had always appeared wholly free from the mean jealouſy which ſome men betray of female talents and female acquirements; on the contrary, ſhe had often heard him declare, that in marrying he had ſought not merely a miſtreſs but a companion, and he had ſaid, that his choice of her had been as much determined by the cultivation of her mind, as by the attractions of her perſon, or the ſweetneſs of her temper.

It is true, theſe were the fondneſſes of his early love, and might be, with reſpect to herſelf, no more than the flatteries of it, but ſhe had invariably ſeen him ſeek the ſociety of the beſt informed females, and he had always appeared to have a more than common pleaſure in their converſation.

She knew not therefore what to impute his ſudden diſpleaſure to, on his diſcovery of her deſire to add another language to thoſe which ſhe already underſtood.

"You are not ſerious," ſaid ſhe, "that my attempt to learn German gives you offence?"

"Perfectly

"Perfectly ſo, and I deſire you will immediately diſmiſs that gentleman there, and inform him that you ſhall not again require his attendance."

Ellen turning to the German, told him, in French, that ſhe was at preſent particularly engaged, and that ſhe would let him know when ſhe again wiſhed to ſee him."

The man departed, and Ellen turning to Sir William ſaid, "Pray what am I to underſtand from all this?"

"That it is my will that you do not learn German, and that any farther attempt to acquire the language will be, on your part, an act of diſobedience."

"You have ſo little uſed me to ſo authoritative a ſtyle, that you muſt forgive me if I ſay I am ſomewhat ſuppriſed with it."

"I knew the new philoſophy of matrimony, as with every thing elſe, is equality; but I believe we were united upon the old terms of the wife's obedience and ſubordination, and there ought to be nothing ſurpriſing if I exact from you no more than what you voluntarily engaged to perform."

"I thought I underſtood," returned Ellen, "that you preferred receiving your rights in the free-will offerings of love, rather than in the tribute of duty; if I am miſtaken, of two unhappy people you will be the moſt to be pitied—but you may be aſſured you ſhall moſt ſtrictly receive your due."

"If there ever were a time when I had ſuch an option," ſaid Sir William with a ſigh, "is it not gone for ever? Will you, (added

he, after ſome little pauſe) will you order your maid to fold up thoſe books? pointing to the German grammar, &c. that lay upon the table, "and I will put my ſeal on them?"

"I will do it myſelf," ſaid Ellen, and immediately wrapping up all the books and papers relating to the intended ſtudy, ſhe bound them round with a ſtring, lighted her taper, and preſented the parcel, and a ſtick of ſealing wax to Sir William.

While ſhe was thus employed, Sir William regarded her with the moſt fixed and melancholy attention. Preſerving an invariable ſilence, he took the wax from her, melted it at the taper, dropped ſome drops on the ſtring, and impreſſed it with his ſeal, then caſting up his eyes, "Oh!" exclaimed he, with a deep ſigh, "that there were a poſſibility of a doubt! that I might be again deceived!" and, ſo ſaying, he hurried out of the room.

"Miſerable inconſiſtency!" ſaid Ellen, ſinking quite oppreſſed into a chair, "thus ardently to deſire to be beloved, thus aſſiduouſly to deſtroy all ground for affection."

After this incident Sir William ſeemed as if more than ever to ſhun being alone with Ellen, he appeared as if afraid that ſhe might reſume her influence over his mind. Her preſent ſituation made her particularly intereſting, ſhe was again with child, and ſhe could not help remarking with ſurpriſe, that notwithſtanding Sir William's increaſing indifference towards her, this circumſtance ſeemed to give him much more ſatisfaction than he appeared

appeared to derive from it, when ſhe believed herſelf in the full poſſeſſion of his affections. To herſelf it conveyed little happineſs.

The preſent depreſſed ſtate of her mind, and the remembrance of the bitter diſappointment in which her former hopes from the ſame ſource had ended, deprived her of the power of looking forward to the birth of her child either as an alleviation to her own ſorrows, or as the probable beginning of a ſtate of happineſs to another human being.

In this manner the winter paſſed away at Dreſden—Sir William had been more than once abſent from her for two or three nights at a time, either engaged in viſits to ſuch of his former friends as reſided at ſome diſtance from Dreſden, or in the purſuits of the ſports of the field. For the latter purpoſe he declared his intention, in the early part of the ſpring, of eſtabliſhing himſelf, for ſome little time in a Saxon village, on the confines of Bohemia, it was a part of the country with which he was well acquainted, and which would afford him plenty of game; and from the liberty of ſporting that he had received from many of his friends, it would be fully in his power to purſue it.

Ellen had no reluctance to accompany him; ſhe rather hoped advantage from change of place, than dreaded any increaſe to her preſent chagrins; and Dreſden had been too melancholy a ſojourn to her for her not to find ſome relief in bidding it adieu.

## CHAP. X.

" Studiſi ognun giovare altrui, ch' è rade
" Volte il ben far, ſenza il ſuo premio ſia.

ARIOSTO.

THEY were ſoon ſettled in a ſmall houſe little better than a cottage, in a ſmall Saxon village, ſituated in the mountain that ſeparates Saxony from Bohemia. Here, however, having previouſly provided themſelves with every neceſſary at Dreſden, they wanted none of the comforts and conveniences of life to which they had been accuſtomed.

Ellen ſoon began to think her ſituation much improved; the manners and appearance of the villagers became extremely intereſting to her: In a little hamlet, ſcarcely containing twenty houſes, ſurrounded by extenſive foreſts, and apparently ſhut up by rugged and almoſt inacceſſible rocks from all intercourſe with civilized life, Ellen found a gaiety, a hoſpitality, a ſociability of manners, that ſhe had often in vain ſought for in more poliſhed ſocieties. Theſe were accompanied it is true, by the hardeſt labour, but the virtuous exertions of individuals for the ſupport of their reſpective families, ſeemed to be the ſource of no obſtruction to the general hilarity.

Ellen alſo obſerved, with pleaſure, that almoſt every body could read, and that this general

general diffuſion of knowledge was far from being any obſtacle to any of the cares of the moſt aſſiduous houſewifery. Clean, active, and ſpirited, the women particularly charmed her by the beauty of their ſhapes, and the animation of their looks; and ſhe more than ever regretted the want of a common language between them and herſelf.

In ſpite of this obſtruction to their more intimate intercourſe, Ellen ſpent much of her time in the cottages and in walks through the adjacent woods; ſhe longed to clamber amongſt the rocks, as ſhe had been accuſtomed to do in happier days in dear Northumberland, but this her preſent circumſtances forbad.

Sir William was ſo frequently abſent, that he knew little how ſhe paſſed her time, and had he known, it could have made no objection.

One of her favourite walks was round the back part of the village through a ſmall wood, which led along the ſide of a rivulet, which coming ſuddenly to an abrupt and ſomewhat ſteep rock, overgrown by bruſh-wood, threw itſelf down with a precipitancy that produced in miniature one of the moſt beautiful caſcades imaginable. The path wound gently below this rock, and the rivulet, after its fall, reſuming its calmneſs, flowed quietly along the valley.

Immediately at the foot of this rock was placed a cottage, which from its ſituation and the accompanying features of the ſurrounding ſcene, was pictureſque beyond deſcription,

and Ellen had often ſtood contemplating it from above with a pleaſure inexpreſſible, and often had ſhe deſcended to reſt herſelf on the bench at its door, and to receive the welcome refreſhment of a bowl of milk, with which its hoſpitable inhabitants were always willing to ſupply her.

One morning ſhe directed her ſteps to the favorite ſpot, and finding herſelf more than uſually fatigued with her walk, thought with uncommon ſatisfaction of her reſting-place the bench. What then was her grief and diſappointment when arriving on the top of the rock, from whence firſt the cottage could be ſeen, ſhe looked for it in vain? The cottage was no more, but from its ſcite aroſe a curling ſmoke, which told with too much certainty its fate. Of ſelf in ſuch a moment no one would have thought. Ellen knew not that ſhe exiſted, but ran with a precipitancy round the rock that left her no breath when ſhe arrived at the bottom of it.

Here ſhe found the ruined and deſolated family given up to all the horrors of deſpair. It conſiſted of a mother, two daughters, and three children, the offspring of one of the daughters, the huſband of whom, a miner, being at preſent engaged at ſome diſtance from his home, had left the helpleſs females without that aſſiſtance which would probably have averted a calamity, which, with a lamentation uſeleſs as their own, he would now only be able to deplore.

On the ſight of Ellen, all the poor ſufferers gathered around her; the old woman graſped her

her hand, the children caught hold of her cloaths, the mother pointed to her ruined cottage, and then to her infants. The appeal was irreſiſtible, there was no need of language—the note of ſupplication is the ſame in all—Ellen's heart was ever reſponſive to its cry; ſhe returned the preſſure of the old woman's hand, ſhe embraced the children, ſhe took out her purſe, it contained not much, for the ſupplies of Sir William were no longer regular; but happily much was not wanted. The ruin, it is true, was compleat, but the means of recovery were not very extended—Ellen gave all ſhe had, it appeared a mine of wealth to the receivers, and their expreſſions of gratitude, they were more than the feeling heart of Ellen could bear. The bench was gone, but ſhe ſat down on a ſtone, and the younger ſiſter, who was the firſt to obſerve her emotion, ran haſtily to the rivulet, and brought her a little water in a wooden bowl; Ellen drank it and was relieved, and roſe to depart. Again the gratitude of the now happy family threw them at her feet.

At length eſcaped from theſe, to her, painful effuſions of their feelings, Ellen turned her ſteps homewards with a lightened purſe, but with a heart ten times more lightened. She had not known a ſenſation ſo delightful ſince the day in which ſhe had relieved the diſtreſſes of the grandſon of old Deborah.

Oh! ſaid ſhe to herſelf, how little do thoſe know of happineſs, who confine it to the gratification of ſelf!

Ellen now grew ſo near the time of her confinement, that ſhe began earneſtly to wiſh that Sir William would remove from their preſent ſituation. It had been determined that ſhe ſhould lie-in at Vienna, and that from thence, after her recovery, they ſhould proſecute their tour; a tour, which Ellen no longer wiſhed to be extended. Her wiſhes were fixed on England, and ſhe ſometimes thought if ſhe might be permitted to return thither, with a healthy baby in her arms, ſhe might ſtill ſecure to herſelf a tolerable portion of happineſs.

Day after day paſſed away, and Sir William ſtill found new reaſons for continuing where they were, but at length their removal could be delayed no longer, if indeed Ellen was to arrive at Vienna before her lying-in.

Sir William had for ſome time paſt ſuſpended the unceaſing attention, which on their firſt leaving England he had ſhewn to the perſonal attendants upon Ellen; her preſent ſervant had lived with her ſince her arrival at Dreſden, and ſhe had no reaſon to wiſh to change her. Two days, however, before the day on which it was now fixed they ſhould leave the village, Sir William expreſſed the moſt pointed diſapprobation of her; told of his ſuſpicions of her honeſty, complained of her impertinence, and deſired Ellen would diſmiſs her.

Ellen could not help a little remonſtrating againſt a requeſt, the compliance with which would expoſe her to all the fatigues and inconveniencies of a long journey in her preſent

ſent helpleſs circumſtances, without the aſſiſtance ſhe had been ſo long accuſtomed to, and ſhe propoſed that ſhe might be allowed to retain her ſervant until her arrival at Vienna, when ſhe ſaid ſhe would willingly diſcharge her. Sir William urged her immediate diſmiſſion, and whatever were the inconveniencies that Ellen might fear from it, ſhe thought them leſs than thoſe which attended a conteſt with Sir William; ſhe therefore acquieſced, and Sir William promiſed to ſeek out ſome peaſant's daughter, who might accompany them on their journey, and continue with Ellen until ſhe could find ſomebody more to her mind at Vienna.

Fortunately his enquiries were anſwered by a young perſon who was juſt returned from ſervice at Dreſden, and ſhe willingly conſented to attend upon Ellen as long as ſhe wiſhed her to do ſo. The caprice that Sir William manifeſted in theſe particulars, was not confined to the attendants upon Ellen, he had repeatedly parted with his own perſonal ſervant, and at this time their whole ſuite conſiſted of the newly hired Saxon girl and one footman.

"We will eſtabliſh ourſelves comfortably at Vienna," ſaid Sir William, "already we have a good houſe taken there, and I have deſired a female friend of mine to hire us ſervants. I will now add to the liſt a femme de chambre for you."

"My dear Sir William," ſaid Ellen preſſing his hand, "how happy ſhould I be if you would realize your words. If *indeed* we might

have a comfortable eſtabliſhment *any where*. Long have we wanted it, and yet every comfort and every happineſs ſeem to be in our power."

"Be ſatisfied," ſaid Sir William, "all will ſoon be as it ought to be."

CHAP.

## CHAP. XI.

"Not with the purple colouring of ſucceſs,
"Is virtue beſt adorned."

BARBAULD.

THE road from the village where Sir William and Ellen then were, to the great road which leads from Dreſden to Prague, was intricate, and in ſome degree difficult, but Sir William relied upon his knowledge of the country, and undertook to inſtruct the drivers of the carriage the beſt and ſafeſt way.

They left the village early in the morning and hoped to be able to reach a tolerable good Inn on the direct road from Dreſden to Prague before a late hour at night; but either Sir William deceived himſelf in the degree of information he poſſeſſed, or he never ſeriouſly intended to arrive at the ſpot marked out.

The day's journey was fatiguing, the roads rugged, often alarming, and they found themſelves at the cloſe of night entering into a thick foreſt which by no means anſwered the deſcription that had been given of any of the environs of the place they had been directed to.

Ellen

Ellen, who ſeldom felt vain or unfounded fear, was more fatigued than alarmed, ſhe did not think any danger threatened her, but ſhe felt her ſtrength ſo much exhauſted that ſhe apprehended ſhe ſhould not be able to ſupport herſelf much longer.

Sir William expreſſed a very lively compaſſion for her ſituation, and endeavoured by every means in his power to raiſe her drooping ſtrength and ſpirits. The gloom of the foreſt and the darkneſs of the night made it hazardous to attempt finding a road through the wood, yet there ſeemed to be no alternative, except the remaining where they were in the carriage all night. Ellen propoſed this, but Sir William encouraging her with the hopes that this was really a foreſt with which he was well acquainted, and in the midſt of which was ſituated a hunting box, where if he were not miſtaken in the place, he was aſſured they would be able to meet with ſome accommodation: It was at length determined to endeavour to find their way through the wood.

They proceeded very proſperouſly for ſome time, and had began to hope that even ſhould they not find any houſe, they might at leaſt be able, without accident, to penetrate the foreſt; but at the moment they indulged theſe hopes, the poſtillion, not able to ſee the track, drove over a fallen tree that lay on one ſide of it, and overturned the carriage.

Sir William was ſupporting Ellen in his arms at the inſtant the accident happened, and happily contrived ſo to break the ſhock

of

of the fall to her, that ſhe received no material injury. It was, however, from the darkneſs of the night, and the poſition of the carriage, with difficulty that they were able to diſengage themſelves from it, and even when they were all ſafely placed on the ground, they knew not what next to do.

The carriage was broken, and to have attempted to mend it in the preſent darkneſs would have been a fruitleſs labour. It rained heavily, and Ellen was wholly unable to proſecute her journey on foot, when every ſtep ſhe took might lead her ſtill farther from her way, and from every neceſſary aſſiſtance; to ſtay where they were without ſhelter, chilled with cold, and drenched in rain, with no reſting-place but the wet ground, ſeemed to threaten the moſt fatal conſequences to Ellen.

Sir William appeared half diſtracted, repeating every moment, "Good God! what have I done?" The ſervants exclaimed, "What ſhall we do?" The poor Saxon girl wept bitterly, and Ellen when a little recovered from the firſt ſhock, ſeemed the only perſon capable of a rational thought.

"I cannot ſtand," ſaid ſhe, almoſt ſinking from Sir William's arms as ſhe ſpoke, "but if you can contrive to get at the little ſeat on which I reſted my feet in the carriage, I can ſit here 'till the poſtillions have a little aſcertained where we are; if this is really the foreſt you take it for, we cannot be far from the hunting box you have deſcribed; from thence we may poſſibly procure light, and ſuch aſſiſtance,

tance, as will enable us either to remove thither, or ſo to raiſe the carriage that we may remain ſafe and ſheltered from the weather the remainder of the night.

Sir William preſſed her tenderly to his heart, as if at once to thank her for her calmneſs and reſolution, and to re-animate his own.

The ſeat was ſoon found, and Sir William placing Ellen in it, knelt behind her, and ſupported her in his arms. He then gave orders for one of the poſtillions and his own ſervant to purſue the track they were in, which he ſaid, if he were right in his conjectures concerning the place, muſt bring them in leſs than a mile to the ſpot he had mentioned, there they had only to name his name, and tell his diſtreſs, and he was aſſured of every aſſiſtance that could be given.

The ſervants were abſent nearly an hour, and Ellen was ſo much overcome by fatigue, the beating of the rain, and above all by the uncommon kind of diſtreſs that ſeemed to have ſeized Sir William; for as he joined his face to hers ſhe felt his tears trickle down her cheeks; that when they returned ſhe had ſcarcely power to benefit by the aſſiſtance they brought.

The moſt cheering part of this aſſiſtance was light, but that which afforded the moſt eſſential ſervice was a ſmall tilted cart, the bottom of which was well covered with ſtraw. Upon this, Sir William contrived to place the cuſhions of the carriage ſo as to form a tole-

rable

rable bed, and having by the help of the light been enabled to get at a box of cordials, he made Ellen take ſome of them, and then with the aſſiſtance of the ſervants eaſily lifted her into the cart; here he alſo placed the maid ſervant, who ſhivering, wet, and crying made a moſt deplorable figure. The trunk that contained the night clothes furniſhed her with a ſeat, and Sir William making one of the men who had come from the houſe lead the way with the lanthorn, he himſelf mounting one of the chaiſe horſes accompanied the cavalcade by the ſide of the cart.

In this manner they proceeded rather more than a mile, and reached the houſe without any new accident, and with little farther inconvenience.

The firſt object was to change Ellen's clothes, and put her to bed, and when this was accompliſhed Sir William made her take ſuch refreſhments as could be procured, and then left her in the hope that ſhe would repoſe.

Nor was his hope vain—Worn out with fatigue, ſhe ſoon dropped aſleep, and after ſome hours of reſt awoke much recruited.

Sir William appeared extremely pleaſed when he was aſſured the adventures of the preceding night had been attended with no eſſential ill conſequences. He propoſed to continue where they were through the day, both becauſe it was neceſſary the carriage ſhould be repaired, and as a farther refreſhment to Ellen.

Towards

Towards the evening of the day, Sir William told her that he had indeed widely miſtaken the way he meant to have taken, and that he found he had wandered very diſtant from that which led into the public road to Prague, but that the miſtake had brought him ſo near the manſion of an old friend, that except for the inconvenience that had occurred to her, he could not lament it.

He then mentioned the name of a lady, with whoſe ſon Ellen knew he had formerly been extremely connected, and he ſpoke in the higheſt terms of the hoſpitality and kindneſs which ſhe had always ſhewn him.

"We are not more than ſix miles from her houſe," ſaid he, "and I ſhould never forgive myſelf if I were to be ſo near without paying my reſpects to her; the carriage is now mended, we will go together, ſhe will be delighted to ſee you, and I ſhall be ſurpriſed from what I know of her character, if ſhe does not offer you an aſylum with her till you are in a fitter ſtate to undertake a long journey. The misfortunes of yeſterday have made me a coward, when I think of the length of the travel that is before you, I tremble for the conſequences."

Ellen declared herſelf very able to proſecute her journey to Vienna, and avowed the preference ſhe ſhould give to being in a houſe of her own, during her confinement, to any accomodations, however comfortable, that might be afforded her in another.

"Well, we need not ſettle this now," ſaid Sir William, "we will act as we ſee occaſion.

on. This night at leaſt we will paſs with my old friend. But can you diſpenſe with the attendance of your maid? I never ſaw ſuch a fool, ſhe blubbers and ſhivers yet; I ſhould be very glad to exclude her from the party, and for one night——"

"Oh! I can do very well without her," interrupted Ellen, "and indeed I ſhall be glad to ſave her any farther fatigue for a few hours, ſhe has reaſon for her tears, ſhe is extremely bruiſed and hurt, and is ſo ſtiff with the cold ſhe caught laſt night, that ſhe can hardly move; I ſhall deſire that ſhe go to bed and continue there till we rejoin her at this place tomorrow."

All this being arranged, Sir William and Ellen began their little journey, but it ſeemed as if Sir William was doomed to be convicted of ignorance whenever he boaſted of his knowledge of the country. The ſix miles ſeemed to be lengthened into twice that number, and it was already nearly dark and yet there was no appearance of the habitation to which they were going.

"Surely you cannot be again miſtaken," ſaid Ellen, "I ſhould be ſorry to paſs ſuch another night as the laſt."

"There is no miſtake this time," returned Sir William rather peeviſhly, "nor no danger."

"But ſurely we muſt have come much more than ſix miles?"

"Don't you ſee the roads are bad and tedious?"

"I fear

"I fear arriving at an unſeaſonable hour, and that your old friend, though glad to ſee us, may be put to ſome inconvenience."

"I never knew women direct their fears aright—I intreat you not to perplex yourſelf with what does not concern you."

Ellen remained ſilent and ſad; the deepning ſhades of night added to the uneaſineſs of her ſenſations, and a confuſed apprehenſion of ſhe hardly knew what ſtole over her mind. At length they arrived at the top of a long avenue, and Sir William calling haſtily to the man to ſtop, "This," ſaid he to Ellen, "is the place, I will get out and announce our arrival before the carriage can be heard at the houſe, leſt our appearance at ſo late an hour may alarm the old lady; ſtay where you are about ten minutes, and then follow me ſlowly down the avenue."

So ſaying, Sir William jumped out of the carriage, and left Ellen wondering, diſturbed, and unhappy. The ſervants obeyed the directions given, and in about the time preſcribed followed Sir William.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XII.

"All gracious heaven,
Juſt are thy ways, and righteous thy decrees,
But dark and intricate; elſe why this meed,
——— "This ſad return,
"For innocence and truth."

ANSTY.

THE avenue was cloſed at the other end by a large pair of gates, which opened into a court ſurrounded by buildings; the gates they found open, and were directed by a light immediately oppoſite, to drive up to the door of the houſe. Here they found Sir William.

"We are extremely unlucky," ſaid he as he opened the chaiſe door, and aſſiſted Ellen to get out, "my old friend has ſpent the winter at Prague, a thing ſhe never did when I knew her, and ſhe is not yet returned."

"Then," ſaid Ellen, ſhrinking back, "let us return, the night is fine, and now we know the road, it will not appear half ſo tedious as it did in coming."

"No, no, I will not ſuffer that: I have ſtill a friend in the garriſon: We ſhall be well accommodated to-night, and I will not again expoſe myſelf to your unreaſonable fears of darkneſs and rugged roads."

"That's

"That's a reproach I hardly deſerve," ſaid Ellen ſmiling, "but be it as you will."

She then entered the door, which opened into a long and narrow paſſage, and in which there was no other light than that which Sir William held in his hand. He led the way, and they ſoon found themſelves in a hall, not very ſpacious but very gloomy. Here they were met by a reſpectable looking perſon, who had alſo a light in her hand; ſhe was a woman of about fifty, and ſeemed to regard Ellen with looks of the moſt ſcrutinizing curioſity.

"That's my old friend the houſekeeper," ſaid Sir William, "and ſhe aſſures me her lady would never forgive her if ſhe were to turn us from her doors at this time of night."

Ellen was going to make her acknowledgments, in french, but Sir William ſaid, "You may ſpare your civilities, for the old dame underſtands not a word of any language, but her native German."

"Upon how many occaſions lately," exclaimed Ellen, "have I had reaſon to regret my ignorance of that language!" Then from a ſudden feeling, that this might ſound as a taunt to Sir William, who had refuſed her permiſſion to learn it, ſhe added, "but all cauſe for regret will ſoon be over; once returned to dear England, and I hope we ſhall ſpeak only Engliſh for the reſt of our lives."

As ſhe ſaid this the light that the woman held fell full on the face of Sir William, and Ellen ſaw with ſurpriſe the ſudden alteration of

of his countenance. He caſt up his eyes, with a look almoſt of horror, and repeated, "Once returned to England."

Ellen took hold of his arm and perceived it trembled; but at this moment their attendant opened a door, and they entered a large and tolerably furniſhed parlour, where there was a blazing wood fire, and two lighted candles placed on a table before it.

The ſervant ſaid ſomething to Sir William to which he gave an anſwer apparently of aſſent, ſhe went out, and Sir William giving Ellen a chair, threw himſelf into another, and ſeemed loſt in thought.

Ellen regarded him with ſurpriſe for a few moments, and at length ventured to ſay, "are you not well?"

At the ſound of her voice Sir William ſtarted from his reverie, and ſaid, "Well? yes, very well I believe, but I am hungry: Our old lady has promiſed us ſome ſupper, I care not how ſoon ſhe keeps her word."

Then endeavouring to appear in ſpirits, he would have rallied Ellen on the apprehenſions he ſaid ſhe had betrayed on the road, but his cheerfulneſs was evidently forced, and before the ſervant returned Sir William had again ſunk into thoughtfulneſs.

It was not long before the houſekeeper made her appearance, accompanied by another female, with preparations for ſupper, and preſently after the ſupper was on the table.

The meal for which Sir William had expreſſed ſo much deſire, was not reliſhed by him in a manner that juſtified the impatience he

he had ſhewn for its appearance—Ellen preſſed him to eat, and yielding to her entreaties, he took ſome fowl on his plate, but Ellen obſerved, that the moment her eye was withdrawn, he ſeemed to forget that it was there, and fixed a melancholy and diſturbed look upon her.

In making theſe obſervations Ellen loſt all appetite alſo, and the ſupper was ſerved and taken away without having been much diminiſhed by either.

When the ſervants were gone, Sir William ſhivering drew his chair nearer the fire.

"I am ſure you are unwell," ſaid Ellen anxiouſly, "it is hardly poſſible you ſhould have been expoſed ſo many hours to ſuch weather as we were out in laſt night, with impunity: Do you think Madam Houſekeeper has no family medicine that might be of ſervice to you? ſomething that would make you perſpire might remove all your complaints before morning."

Sir William ſeemed not to hear her, and the ſhuddering with which he was ſeized had more the appearance of proceeding from emotion than from cold. Ellen felt dreadfully alarmed—ſhe took his hand, but dropped it ſuddenly, ſtartled with the burning heat which it communicated to her own: "You are feveriſh—you are ill—for God's ſake let us inquire what there is in the houſe that it will be proper for you to take."

"Oh! God of heaven and earth!" ſaid Sir William, with a ſigh from the bottom of his very ſoul.

"Dear

"Dear Sir William!"

"Dear?—Oh, Ellen, no no, no."

Ellen ſeized with an inſtant fear for his intellects, ſnatched up one of the candles, and was making toward the door.

"What are you about? and where would you go?"

"I am going to ſeek the houſekeeper; I hope ſhe will be able to furniſh me with ſomething that will be of ſervice to you."

"And if you ſpeak to her ſhe will not underſtand you.—It is true, I am not well, I ſhiver, I burn, I have an intenſe head-ach, the effects all of a violent cold—ſomething to make me perſpire, and a good night's reſt, will ſet all to rights."

"God grant it!" ſaid Ellen fervently.

"There's no doubt," ſaid Sir William, as he went out of the room.

He was abſent nearly a quarter of an hour, which ſeemed almoſt an age to Ellen; when he returned his looks were compoſed, and his air ſomewhat more cheerful; he was followed by the ſervant they had firſt ſeen, who had a bowl in her hand.

"Our good friend there," ſaid Sir William, with a melancholy ſmile, "has made me a mixture that ſhe ſays is ſovereign for a cold; ſhe has alſo prepared me a bed apart from yours, leſt I ſhould diſturb you; I will drink your health, and then let us retire to our rooms." He took the bowl, he fixed his eyes intently on Ellen for a moment, "Good night, *God bleſs you*," ſaid he with an emphaſis, and raiſing the bowl to his mouth he drank

drank off the contents; but Ellen perceived that he turned deadly pale, and that his lips trembled.—Horrible apprehenſions croſſed the mind of Ellen, which ſhe durſt not ſuffer to harbour there for a moment.

"Will not you have ſomething warm?" ſaid Sir William, "ſome negus? or whey? I did not offer you any of my potion, for tho' it may be ſalutary, it was nauſeous."

"I think I will," returned Ellen, "I am cold myſelf, I ſhould be glad of any thing warm."

Sir William ſpoke to the woman, who inſtantly withdrew, and Sir William, taking Ellen's hand, drew her towards the fire, "you look uneaſy, you look frightened, I aſſure you my indiſpoſition is trifling; I ſhall be well to-morrow, and then you will wonder how you came to be ſo much alarmed: You ſay *you* are cold," added he, "for *once* let the arms of a huſband warm you."

He ſnatched her to his heart, and held her there for a moment—then letting her go, as the door opened, "Oh! Ellen!" ſaid he, "why not thus for ever!"

"For God's ſake tell me what all this means, either you or I am ſtrangely diſordered."

"Means!—It means juſtice—but come, we will talk it all over to-morrow." Then taking a bowl from the ſervant, who juſt then preſented it to Ellen—he put it to his lips, and aſſuming a cheerful look, "Excellent white wine whey, I aſſure you, much better than mine—now drink my health."

"Heaven

"Heaven is my witneſs how ſincerely I do," ſaid Ellen, "and taking the bowl, ſhe drank a part of what it contained; it appeared to her what Sir William had ſaid it was, except that ſhe thought there was ſome taſte in it more unuſual than diſagreeable.

"Now," ſaid Sir William, "let us go to bed, reſt will do us both good." Then ſpeaking to the ſervant, and again to Ellen, "If you will follow the old lady, ſhe will ſhew you your apartment, I know the way to mine."

"I wiſh I might accompany you thither," ſaid Ellen earneſtly, "if I were to ſee you aſleep, my reſt would be better."

"No, no, that muſt not be; you had too diſturbed a night laſt night, to become a watcher this: I ſhall want no attendants, but if it will make you eaſy, James ſhall ſit up an hour or two in my room, and when I am aſleep he ſhall let you know."

Ellen joyfully accepted this offer, and ſtretching out her hand to Sir William ſhe bade him good night. He preſſed it tenderly between his, held it to his lips, and ſhe felt a tear drop upon it, yet he ſpoke cheerfully and with unconcern: "Pray lend me your watch: mine has been ſpoilt in laſt night's overthrow, and does not go."

Ellen gave him her watch, and again bid him good night. He followed her to the door of the room, as if unwilling to loſe ſight of her, and as he turned from her ſhe heard him ſigh deeply.

Ellen following her conductor croſſed the hall, from the upper end of which went a pair

of ſtairs that led to a gallery above, in which were ſeveral doors; the woman opened the ſecond, on the left hand, and Ellen found herſelf in a ſpacious room, the modern furniture of which ſomewhat ſurpriſed her. Around the fire-place, which was well ſupplied with fire, were arranged her night dreſs, and every thing ſhe could require in the niceſt order. The woman opened a door on one ſide of the room, which Ellen ſaw was deſigned for her bed chamber, this alſo had a fire in it, and ſeemed to be provided with every comfort, and with many of thoſe accommodations that Ellen could not have expected to have found in the apartment of an old Bohemian lady.

Her attendant offered her ſervice to aſſiſt in undreſſing her, and Ellen haraſſed in mind and body, was willing to take off a part of her clothes, and put on her dreſſing gown, but ſhe meant not to go to bed, until ſhe had heard ſomething more of Sir William, and ſhe now felt the moſt tormenting perplexity from not being able to explain herſelf to her companion, who ſeemed reſolved not to leave her 'till ſhe had ſeen her in bed.

At length it occurred to her that ſhe might eaſily make her comprehend her wiſh to have a written paper delivered to Sir William, and ſhe wrote theſe words with a pencil.

"Pray inform my too civil attendant, that I wiſh her to leave me alone, and be ſo kind as to direct her to come to me as ſoon as James can inform her that you are aſleep."

The woman readily underſtood what ſhe was to do with the paper, ſhe took it, and in a few

a few moments returned with theſe words from Sir William.

"If you have any regard for my health, let the old lady ſee you in bed; I promiſe you ſhe ſhall bring you good news of me in conſequence: but if you are left to yourſelf, I know you will ſit up all night, and this thought will keep me waking."

Ellen in return wrote, "I acquieſce, but remember your promiſe."

She then ſuffered her attendant to aſſiſt her in going to bed, ſhe made the woman underſtand that ſhe wiſhed to have a light, and this being procured, the woman drew the curtains and left her.

Ellen, in her own mind, was confident that ſhe ſhould not cloſe her eyes, until ſhe had heard from Sir William, ſuch an impreſſion had his apparent indiſpoſition both of body and mind made upon her: But her head was ſcarcely laid upon her pillow, before ſhe fell into a ſleep profound as death.

She awoke from this ſleep with a ſudden ſtart, ſuppoſing that drowſineſs had only for a few moments overcome her; but, ſurpriſed by the kind of light that ſhe ſaw in her room, which ſhe thought could proceed from neither fire or candle, ſhe haſtily undrew the curtain, and was amazed and chagrined to find a meridian ſun ſhining full upon her bed. She roſe haſtily, and wrapping a few cloaths around her, opened the door which led into the next room, deſigning to go from thence to the gallery to ſee for ſomebody, of whom ſhe

could make inquiries after Sir William. On opening the door ſhe found in the adjoining room, as if in waiting, the woman who had attended her the night before.

Ellen was proceeding to make her underſtand what ſhe wanted, by earneſtly repeating Sir William's name, when the woman delivered her a ſealed letter, the direction of which ſhe ſaw was in his hand. On the ſight of this letter her heart ſunk within her, as if it foretold all ſhe had to ſuffer, yet at the moment ſhe thought not of herſelf; ſhe was ſeized with an univerſal trembling, the letter dropt from her hand, and ſhe ſunk almoſt ſenſeleſs into a chair. Yet how wide were her apprehenſions from the truth!—For Sir William ſhe only feared; and yet Sir William, withheld by no compaſſionate conſideration for her, was at this moment conſummating that vengeance for imagined crimes, which he had been ſo many months in preparing with the cooleſt deliberation.

The woman, as if ſhe had expected the effect that even the ſight of the letter would have, run readily to the aſſiſtance of Ellen, poured drops and water down her throat, gave her air, and ſeemed by the tone of her voice to exhort her to patience.

Ellen, whoſe mind was fixed wholly upon the draught that ſhe had ſeen Sir William ſwallow the night before, and now convinced that the ſoundneſs of her ſleep had been procured by medicine, could think only of one cataſtrophe, and regarding the letter with horror, had not courage to open it; the woman took it

it from the floor, preſented it to her, and ſeemed to intreat her to read it.

Confuſed and overwhelmed as Ellen's mind was, there ſeemed to her ſomething in this action of the woman's that ſpoke the evil not to be ſo bad as ſhe feared; ſhe took the letter, ſhe broke the ſeal, and in the relief from the horror that had at firſt ſeized her, forgot for a few moments the extent of that miſery which this letter announced to herſelf:—The letter was as follows:

"Summon to your ſupport all that ſtrength of mind, which has ſo often given me cauſe to admire you. Oh! Ellen, had it been uniform, had it ſprung from principle!—But away with every vain regret; where the guilt is certain, all compunction for the puniſhment ſhould ceaſe, and if the chaſtiſement is heavy you will not affirm it is diſproportionate to the crime. It would however, be uſeleſs to reproach you; my injured love, my violated honor, cannot ſpeak more ſeverely than will your own heart; and in guarding myſelf from the poſſibility of being again deceived, I wiſh not to inflict any unneceſſary rigour."

"When you know that I was appriſed, by the conviction of my own ſenſes, of the laſt viſit you received from your undoer, when you are told that I read the invitation for a repetition of his viſit under ſuch forms as would elude ſuſpicion and lay jealouſy to ſleep; you will not wonder that in a cauſe that would not admit of doubt, I have thought all explanation unneceſſary; or that being convinced of having been once betrayed, I reſolved upon ſuch meaſures

ſures as would ſecure me from the poſſibility of a ſecond inſult."

"In knowing that I never poſſeſſed your heart, I ought, perhaps, to have foreſeen all that followed; but, deceived by the appearance of an integrity and candour which, unſupported as they were by reality, will remain, I confidently believe, unparalleled, the warnings of my reaſon were unheard, and the miſgivings of my mind were diſregarded."

"How often has the ſemblance of a ſincerity, which had it been genuine, angels might have copied with advantage, baffled the precautions of prudence, and ſuſpended the rod of juſtice? But the veil is now fallen, and even you can delude no longer—Here then let all retroſpect end."

"You need not be told how a huſband ought to feel and act on ſuch a diſcovery; yet the agonies you witneſſed in me this night, with ſo much alarm, may ſhew you that I am not yet free from that weakneſs, which has ſo long enabled you to deceive me; it may ſhew you, that the meaſures which juſtice and honor demanded from me, are not purſued without a torture of mind equal to any I can inflict upon you. If this conviction can lighten the deſtiny that from henceforward awaits you, I grudge you not ſuch an alleviation, poor, undone, miſerable wretch as you are!"

"Again I entreat you to collect every power of your mind: Conſider it is no ſingle life that is at ſtake; ſuffer not any extravagance of grief, any exceſs of deſpair, to hazard an exiſtence, of which you cannot believe you have

have a right to diſpoſe of——take pity alſo on yourſelf——If you would preſerve one ray of hope to gild your future life, deſtroy not, by any extravagance of grief in the preſent moment, the only ſource from which it can proceed."

"I expect not that a creature which muſt partake of my nature ſhall be dear to you, as was that cheriſhed darling in which I had no part: but if it be mine, it is alſo yours; let that conſideration make it an object of your care, and add not the guilt of murder to thoſe other crimes which ſo deeply ſtain your conſcience."

"This is not the upbraiding of reſentment, it is the warning of friendſhip, take it as ſuch, and may you be enabled to endure, with tolerable moderation, the ſeverity of a puniſhment, the juſtice of which you will not diſpute. Know, then, you will never henceforward go beyond the boundaries of that habitation in which you are now placed; but every comfort, and every accommodation, and every amuſement that your ſituation will admit, will await you there."

"You will ſee the neceſſity I have been under of depriving you of the ſolace of converſation, and of leaving you deſtitute of all property; devoid of all means of influencing the feelings, or of bribing the avarice of your attendants, I have ſecured beyond a fear your perpetual impriſonment; and I have, by cuting off from you all hope of eſcape, preſerved you from the continual irritation which muſt have attended any attempt for that pur-

poſe, which even in circumſtances more favorable to ſucceſs, ſuch is the extent of the precaution I have taken, would certainly have ended in diſappointment: Nor in ſuch a caſe would diſappointment be all that you would incur, neceſſity would then induce a much more rigorous confinement, an infinitely ſeverer reſtraint."

"When you reflect how much it imports me to perpetuate a confinement that I have once began, you will not doubt but that I have taken the precautions I ſpeak of, nor the conſequences to yourſelf ſhould you endeavour to elude them. Although unable to converſe with you, you will find your attendants always reſpectful, attentive and ready to adminiſter to your wants; you will be regularly ſupplied with accommodations of every kind, and if it ſhould ſo happen that my attention on this head does not fulfil your wiſhes, you have only to write down in French any thing that you may wiſh to be ſupplied with, and you will obtain all you deſire. Books, muſical inſtruments, or materials for work, or drawing, I include in this permiſſion; but you will find vain any attempt to convey a letter, even to me. Never, Oh! never will I renew an intercourſe that has coſt me ſo much. Could I doubt I would hear you; but if juſtice cannot make me happy, neither ſhall a weak compaſſion increaſe my miſery. Reſolved to puniſh, I am henceforth deaf to the voice of penitence, and deſiring to love no longer, I ſeek only forgetfulneſs!—

In

In the hour of pain and danger, which now draws ſo near, you will have every aſſiſtance you can poſſibly deſire, and you will receive in a very few days every neceſſary preparatory to that time, which either yourſelf or your infant can want."

"And now, moſt guilty and unfortunate Ellen, what more can I add?—To my regrets and my good wiſhes you are probably alike inſenſible, nor can I expect that my admonitions ſhall prevail, where conſiderations of ſo much more importance have failed to have their due effect—But if it were poſſible that you ſhould at laſt be wiſe, if by taking your puniſhment with patience, you make the beſt of the time that is yet allotted you for penitence, and thus make all the amends in your power for the evils you have occaſioned, you will fulfill all the wiſhes and gratify all the deſires that yet remain in the breaſt of your injured huſband."

## CHAP. XIII.

——"Dona e tolle ogn' altro ben fortuna
"Sola in virtù non ha poſſanza alcuna."

ARIOSTO.

ELLEN read this letter with an aſtoniſhment that ſuſpended for a time all powers of recollection or feeling; ſhe could neither believe or comprehend what ſhe read: Never once had the idea that Sir William ſuſpected her of guilt beyond the eſtrangement of her affections, croſſed her mind; nor could the evidence of her ſenſes now convince her that ſhe was judged, condemned, and puniſhed unheard.

"Where is Sir William?" cried ſhe ruſhing to the door, forgetful that ſhe ſpoke to thoſe who underſtood her not, and thoughtleſs of the diſorder of her dreſs.

The woman miſtook this motion for an attempt to eſcape, and placing herſelf between Ellen and the door, endeavoured, tho' with reſpect and gentleneſs, to detain her.

"Let me go," ſaid Ellen ſtruggling, "let me ſee Sir William, I implore you let me ſee Sir William."

The woman ſhook her head in token of the impoſſibility of a compliance, and again ſhe offered her the letter, which Ellen had a

ſecond

ſecond time let fall to the ground. On this oppoſition from her attendant, a ſudden recollection ſtruck Ellen;—ſhe remembered that ſhe ſpoke in vain, and that her preſent efforts were probably miſunderſtood. Again ſhe read the letter, but ſhe read it with nearly as little comprehenſion of the contents as before.

Totally ignorant of the circumſtances on which ſhe had been condemned, and ſure of her own innocence, ſhe could not believe that Sir William could think her guilty; ſhe could not believe that, unheard, he could puniſh her as guilty.

As ſhe continued to read, ſhe looked for ſome hidden ſenſe to words, that ſhe could not conceive to be uſed in that which was obvious. When ſhe came to the expreſſion "From henceforward you will never go beyond the boundaries of the habitation in which you are now placed," ſhe looked towards the high windows, and around the room, with an air at once wild and thoughtful; then covering her face with her hands, ſhe endeavoured to collect her ſenſes, and be aſſured that ſhe did not dream.

Again ſhe turned to peruſe the letter, and to weigh every ſyllable of it; but ſhe had read it many times before ſhe was able to give it credit as a reality, or was awakened to a full ſenſe of her true ſituation. At length convinced that Sir William was gone, and that he had conſigned her to perpetual impriſonment, ſhe reſted perſuaded that her caſe was as hopeleſs as it was miſerable.

But

But even under this overwhelming conviction, Ellen did not forſake herſelf; ſhe needed not Sir William's exhortations to ſhun all exceſſes in her grief, and every undue and unbecoming violence. Stunned rather than rouſed, afflicted rather than irritated, the firſt recollection of her real ſituation, which was ſufficiently perfect to form any reſolution upon, was followed by a determination to do nothing which could be injurious to her child, or diſagreeable to herſelf. But it was not on her own ſtrength that ſhe relied for power to bear up under ſuch a load of hopeleſs miſery.

The woman who had remained an attentive but forgotten ſpectator of all her movements, ſaw her with ſurpriſe riſe from her chair, with an air of dignified humility, and proſtrating herſelf upon her knees, continue for ſome moments in fervent prayer.

When ſhe aroſe ſhe caſt her eyes upon the woman, and appeared to ſee her for the firſt time. She advanced towards her, and with a mild and complacent aſpect held out her hand towards her; ſeeming by this action to beſpeak her friendſhip, and to declare her own ſubmiſſion. The woman, ſtruck and moved by her manner and look, could not forbear raiſing the hand that was offered her to her lips, and then immediately preſenting her with ſome of her clothes, endeavoured to make her underſtand, how ready ſhe ſhould be to ſerve her. From this moment it ſeemed as if a treaty of amity was ſealed between them, and Ellen felt ſomething like hope revive in her boſom.

When

When Ellen was dreſſed, her attendant opened the door of a room which was oppoſite to the one that led to the bed chamber, and invited Ellen to enter it. Ellen found this room much larger than either the dreſſing-room or bed-chamber, and caſting her eyes round it, ſaw in the manner in which it was furniſhed, a ſad certainty of the intended length of her captivity.

Two book-caſes, which with the books they contained ſeemed to be new, and recently put up, filled the large receſſes on each ſide of the fire; a harpſichord, which alſo appeared to be new, ſtood on one ſide of the room, near it was placed a harp; a writing table, furniſhed with all the materials neceſſary for writing, ſtood near the fire; a ſofa, and one or two chairs, of different forms and dimenſions, with one or two more tables made up the furniture. The room was fitted up with ſtriped linen, and there ſeemed diffuſed over the whole an air of cheerfulneſs that ſuited ill with the ſadneſs of Ellen's ſoul. Hitherto ſhe had not ſhed a tear; on beholding an apartment ſo evidently prepared for her ſolitary priſon, ſhe burſt into a paſſion of weeping, and threw herſelf on the ſofa, in an agony of mind not to be deſcribed.

The calmneſs which ſhe had hitherto preſerved, aroſe more from the ſtunning nature of the blow ſhe had received, and the natural temper and acquired habits of her mind, than from any fortitude that ſhe had yet been able to aſſume upon the preſent occaſion: Suddenly and irreſiſtibly the recollection of Engliſh

gliſh friends and Engliſh joys ruſhed upon her heart, and the ſenſe of their miſery in the loſs of her, and of her's in the loſs of them formed a mingled torture, of ſo acute a kind, as for a time overcame all her ſenſe of the duty of reſignation, and all her fears for the ſafety of her child. Agitated by convulſive twitchings, almoſt choaked by her riſing ſobs, ſhe lay for ſome time in a ſtate of the moſt alarming diſorder.

Her new friend, not more terrified than grieved for the ſituation in which ſhe ſaw her, mingled ſo much genuine compaſſion in her attempts to relieve and calm her, that Ellen, upon whom the voice of kindneſs was never loſt, and whom death alone could hold long inſenſible to the emotions of gratitude, began in pity to what another felt, to ſtill the loud complainings of her own affliction.

She became compoſed and ſilent, patiently took what was offered her, and returning after ſome interval to perfect calmneſs, ſhe ſhewed ſo earneſt a deſire to be left alone, that the compaſſionate Mrs. Ulric at length complied.

Ellen, left to herſelf, wept without reſtraint and without meaſure, and this free indulgence of nature ſaved her overcharged heart from breaking. Her mind glanced hopefully on the compaſſion that ſhe ſaw ſhe had excited in her attendant, and ſhe began to believe it would not be difficult to win her over to her wiſhes.

She wiſhed but to be able to write to Sir William, ſecure, could ſhe once induce him to come to an explanation, that ſhe muſt convince

vince him of her innocence: The rigour of his dealings towards her were all founded on error, and hence, thoſe paſſages of his letter which had at firſt given her the moſt poignant diſtreſs, now inſpired her with hope. Were I the victim of his hatred, (thought Ellen) no juſtification would avail me: But while I am a ſufferer only from his miſtaken ideas of juſtice, in eſtabliſhing my innocence I ſhall put an end to my misfortunes. It ſeemed ſo eaſy to prove this innocence to any one with whom ſhe could ſpeak, that the moſt bitter of her regrets at this moment was her incapacity to converſe with Mrs. Ulric.

This tender-hearted woman returned in a few hours to Ellen's apartment, bringing with her a nicely prepared meal, of which ſhe preſſed Ellen with ſo much kindneſs to partake that ſhe could not wholly refuſe her—but Ellen could not eat: Mrs. Ulric, however, induced her to drink a glaſs of wine, and again left her to herſelf.

The cloſe of this melancholy day now came on, and from thoſe changes to which the mind in the firſt ſtages of affliction is ſubject, grief ſeemed to return with freſh force, as the ſhades of evening overſpread the apartment; nor was her grief wholly unmixed with a degree of terror: Frightful images aroſe in her mind, and ſhe ſcarcely dared truſt herſelf with conſidering, to what means ſo violent as thoſe already taken by Sir William might ultimately lead. But theſe unfounded fears aroſe wholly from the ſhattered ſtate of her nerves—the benevolent countenance of Mrs. Ulric, illu-

minated

minated by the light of two candles, with which ſhe preſently entered the room, diſſipated them in an inſtant, and Ellen eaſily admitted the folly of tormenting herſelf with imaginary evils, when ſhe had ſo many real ones to deplore.

The fatigues that Ellen had undergone for three days had entirely exhauſted her ſtrength, and ſhe readily yielded to the ſigns by which ſhe underſtood Mrs. Ulric to deſire her to go to bed. When there, wearineſs ſo overcame affliction, that if ſhe found no refreſhment, ſhe at leaſt received reſt. Her mind was ſo full of her project of making Mrs. Ulric her friend, that in ſtudying for means to explain herſelf to her, ſhe loſt a part of the ſenſe of what made ſuch an explanation deſirable: She was reſolved alſo, to endeavour the next morning to inſpect every part of her priſon, both as a matter of curioſity, and as a means to aſcertain what degree of indulgence would be allowed her.

Her ſleep as it was broken, ſo it was ſhort; ſhe aroſe early, and looking for her watch, now recollected, for the firſt time, by what artifice Sir William had deprived her of it; ſhe eaſily comprehended his reaſon for ſuch a proceedure, and was not therefore ſurpriſed upon feeling in her pockets to find her purſe gone, and every trinket, of however trifling a value, except the picture of her father, which was ſet very plainly in gold.

On the ſight of a countenance, which never bent its regard towards her but with looks of the fondeſt love, now never more to be beheld

held by her, her whole frame ſhook with diſorder, and her heart ſwelled almoſt to burſting.

"My father," cried ſhe, and preſſed the picture to her lips—"My father!" repeated ſhe, "Now in vain do I call to you for help; now, in my uttermoſt diſtreſs, impotent to ſave?"

Deſpair ſtopt her tongue.

"Oh! God," cried ſhe kneeling down, "be thou my father; thou canſt burſt the walls of this priſon—thou canſt reſtore me to all I hold dear—to reputation, to friendſhip, to happineſs;—Thou canſt do more, thou canſt teach me to endure with patience, perpetual impriſonment; never ending deprivation—let it be as thou wilt."

This act of pious reſignation calmed the hurried paſſions of Ellen; again ſhe preſſed her father's picture to her lips, and felt an emotion of gratitude to Sir William for having left her ſo precious a relique.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XIV.

"There's ſome ill planet reigns,
"I muſt be patient 'till the heavens look
"With an aſpect more favorable."

SHAKESPEARE.

WHEN Mrs. Ulric attended, ſhe found Ellen dreſſed, and apparently perfectly compoſed: Mrs. Ulric withdrew with intention of preparing breakfaſt, and Ellen took an accurate ſurvey of her apartment.——She found, in addition to the three rooms ſhe had ſeen, two cloſets that belonged to her bed chamber, one dark and the other light: The windows of her bed chamber and dreſſing-room were both too high to allow of any thing being ſeen from thence, except when ſtanding cloſe to them; ſhe ſaw they looked upon a garden, which, as far as ſhe could diſcern, was walled round; beyond it ſhe could ſee only woods, that appeared to extend far into the country. The windows of the room which ſeemed to be allotted for her ſitting-room, were lower than thoſe in the other rooms, and appeared to have been newly put in, they opened into the court-yard by which ſhe had entered, and as the window of the light cloſet looked out upon the open country, Ellen comprehended that her apartment occupied one intire ſide of the building. The window

window of this cloſet was too high to look from, except when ſtanding upon a chair, or table, and was ſo ſmall that Ellen could not have got her head through it; the country that could be ſeen from it appeared wild and deſolate.

Ellen felt it a matter of great importance to herſelf, whether ſhe ſhould be allowed the liberty to paſs beyond this apartment, or whether it was indeed the limits of her confinement, ſhe was reſolved to know.

When Mrs. Ulric, who had attended her at breakfaſt, was removing the tea equipage, Ellen aroſe, and went towards the door of her apartment; Mrs. Ulric inſtantly put down what ſhe had in her hand, opened the door of the room, and ſeemed to invite Ellen to enter the gallery: Ellen complied, and Mrs. Ulric going before her, ſhewed her the rooms that were oppoſite thoſe ſhe inhabited: Some of theſe appeared to be occupied by ſervants, and ſome not to be occupied at all; and Ellen thought ſhe underſtood that one belonged to Mrs. Ulric; the furniture was ſcanty, and miſerably old, and ill correſponded with tha which ſhe had ſeen in her own apartment.

From the gallery ſhe deſcended to the hall, and the firſt object that caught her eye, was the door by which ſhe had entered it thro' the long paſſage that led to the outer court. This was now cloſed, and faſtened by a heavy wooden bar, that was placed acroſs it. She went into the parlour, where ſhe had been received the night of her arrival, it was gloomy, and by ſeveral things that lay about

ſhe

ſhe concluded it was the place where Mrs. Ulric uſually ſat: The remembrance how ſhe had been betrayed into her preſent ſituation, ruſhed powerfully on her mind, and ſhe haſtily quitted a place which called to her recollection circumſtances ſhe could not bear to think of.

Returning to the hall, ſhe made towards a door, which ſhe then firſt perceived. Mrs. Ulric ſtepping before, ſhewed her it opened into the offices, but directed her attention to one oppoſite; ſhe opened that too, and Ellen found, with great ſatisfaction that it led immediately to the garden. Mrs. Ulric, as if yielding to the deſire Ellen ſhewed to enter it, made way, and reſpectfully retiring ſuffered Ellen to walk out alone.

Her heart bounded when ſhe found ſhe was miſtreſs of ſuch a privilege, and ſhe felt herſelf half at liberty. She traverſed the gardens with a kind of wild tumultuous hope of immediate eſcape, but ſhe was ſoon convinced of what indeed her reaſon, if this had been a moment when reaſon could have been attended to, would have told her before, that every avenue was ſecurely cloſed.

The garden was ſpacious, and ſeemed to be laid out more for uſe than pleaſure; yet at the greateſt diſtance from the houſe there were ſome retired and ſhady places, that would afford no unpleaſant retreat, in ſuch weather as makes the cooler air preferable to the houſe.

Many parts of the walls were old, and it appeared as if the new building that connect-

ed

ed them together, did not follow the line of any former wall that might have been deſtroyed. From this circumſtance Ellen concluded that the compaſs of the garden had been leſſened; at one ſharp angle, however, the meeting lines of which were formed of walls equally old, ſhe diſcovered a ſmall door, it was very maſſive, and though extremely old, retained great ſtrength; upon it was a lock, but the faſtening of the door did not ſeem to depend upon that: Ellen tried to ſhake it, but found it perfectly ſteady. As well as ſhe could judge from its poſition, it muſt open immediately upon the country, and poor Ellen ſtood for ſome minutes oppoſite to it, fixed in a deep and melancholy reverie, ſo loſt in thought, that ſhe knew not that it was the hope of eſcape through that door, that wholly abſorbed her faculties.

Starting from this temporary ſtupor, ſhe continued her ſearch, but finding no other ſpot in the whole circumference of the garden, from which it was poſſible ſhe ſhould eſcape; ſhe returned again to the door, again ſurveyed it with the greateſt accuracy, again tried to ſhake it upon its hinges, and again found all her efforts ineffectual.

It was impulſe rather than reaſon (as the new caught bird flutters around its cage) that had occaſioned Ellen to make this ſearch: Had it been attended with the diſcovery of an immediate means of eſcape, Ellen was in no condition to have availed herſelf of it, and muſt have declined upon reflection, to make uſe of it.

Her

Her preſent circumſtances, which made walking any diſtance impoſſible; her total want of money, her intire ignorance of the language of the country, would have made it madneſs to have attempted an eſcape, while there remained any hope of inducing Sir William to do her juſtice: On winning Mrs. Ulric to her cauſe ſhe reſted all her real hopes and rational expectations of deliverance, and ſhe determined not to loſe a moment in making the experiment.

Being returned to her apartment, ſhe ſat down with the deſign of forming that letter, which ſhe hoped to be able to prevail upon Mrs. Ulric to deliver; but, upon reperuſing Sir William's, to determine upon the beſt manner in which to enter upon her defence, ſhe found herſelf entirely at a loſs. The circumſtances on which he grounded her condemnation, were entirely unknown to her, and the conviction under which he ſeemed to write, that ſhe muſt herſelf acknowledge her guilt, as it took away every uncertainty upon which explanation could be founded, ſo it appeared to make all explanation impoſſible.

But when ſhe attended to the preciſe act of criminality with which ſhe was charged, in the words, "I was appriſed by the evidence of my own ſenſes of the laſt viſit you received from your undoer," a ſuſpicion found place in her mind that had not before entered it.

Ellen had never ſeen Henry, (for that he was meant by her undoer ſhe had no doubt) ſince they parted in Devonſhire: He had attended her to her carriage, at the hour of her

her departure, and he had aſſiſted her into it, in the preſence of Sir William, of ſeveral ſervants, and of many other people. This attendance could hardly be called a viſit; and if it could, it was not poſſible to fix the ſtain of guilt upon it, nor could it be neceſſary that Sir William ſhould appriſe her, as a piece of information that muſt overwhelm her with ſhame and confuſion, that he had witneſſed it. This ſhe knew well, and ſhe could neither have had the power, nor a motive to conceal it; but as ſhe was perfectly convinced that no ſubſequent interview had taken place between them, and as from the circumſtance of her having withdrawn into the country, before Mr. Villars arrived in town, ſhe thought Sir William muſt be as well convinced of this as herſelf; ſhe began to ſuſpect that Sir William, ſo far from being deceived, ſought only to deceive her—that, delivered up to his reſentment, on being perſuaded, that he ſhould never be able to touch her heart, he had reſolved to puniſh that as a crime in her, which he felt to be ſo ſevere a misfortune to himſelf. His ſaying, that he had ſeen that which ſhe was entirely clear in her own mind he never could have ſeen, confirmed this idea, and made her conclude that he only ſought to colour an act of extreme cruelty and revenge with the thin veil of juſtice.

Theſe ideas filled her with deſpair. She had placed her hopes of redreſs upon the belief that her juſtification would be as acceptable to Sir William as advantageous to herſelf;

ſelf: But now ſhe began to think that her greateſt difficulty would not be in prevailing upon Mrs. Ulric to deliver her letter, but in inducing Sir William to give it a candid reading. His prohibition to write to him—— his declaration that he wiſhed only for forgetfulneſs—his acknowledgment that the voice of penitence would plead in vain, all concurred to make it evident that he wiſhed not to have her innocence eſtabliſhed.

"It is hatred and revenge that have placed me here," ſaid ſhe, the tears running down her cheeks, "and it would be in vain to hope for my deliverance from tenderneſs and love."

Her thoughts haſtily returned to the garden—again ſhe reconſidered the walls of it; their height, their ſolidity, precluded every hope of eſcape that way: Her own helpleſs ſtate, even could ſhe get out, now alſo ruſhed upon her mind; to owe her deliverance to her own powers ſhe felt was impoſſible, and as ſhe would not neglect any poſſible chance of putting an end to her ſorrows, ſhe finally reſolved, notwithſtanding her hopeleſſneſs of its ſucceſs, to try the effect of a letter to Sir William——Thus ſhe wrote.

"I addreſs you not as a penitent, not as an object of your love, I appeal only to your juſtice. I am innocent. Never, even in thought, have I wandered from the duty that I owe you; of this you will ſome time be convinced: If, therefore, you have any conſideration for the future peace of your mind, wait not for this conviction, until my injuries are paſt redreſs."

"I beſeech

"I beſeech you let me underſtand the particulars of my accuſation, that I may be able to clear myſelf even from ſuſpicion.——To the preſent unintelligible charge that you bring againſt me, I can only repeat that I am innocent. If you will condeſcend to explain yourſelf to me, I can prove myſelf ſo. I know of no viſit, I am conſcious of no invitation, that can fix the ſlighteſt ſtigma upon my name, of none that I would not avow in the face of the whole world. I cannot comprehend what you mean. I ſuppreſs, however, all complaint; I am willing to believe you have acted upon a miſtake, and if you will only permit me to ſee and to converſe with you, I am confident I ſhall loſe at once all cauſe and all inclination to complain."

Having finiſhed this letter, ſhe reſolved to aſſail Mrs. Ulric with all her powers when next ſhe ſaw her——Nor was the opportunity long wanting. This compaſſionate woman, whoſe heart was ill ſuited to the taſk aſſigned her, was not able to abſent herſelf long from her unfortunate priſoner, leſt ſome conſolation might be wanting that ſhe could afford. She entered the room, bringing with her ſome biſcuits and a cup of chocolate; for Ellen, with all her efforts, had not been able to ſwallow a morſel at breakfaſt.

Ellen took the refreſhment that was offered her with a ſmile, put a part of one of the biſcuits in her mouth, and taſted the chocolate, but ſhe could do no more——her heart ſwelled, and tears ran down her cheeks. Mrs. Ulric

looked on her with compaſſion, and ſought to ſooth her.

Ellen ſeized her hand, and preſſing it fervently to her lips, "Oh! if you could be induced to aſſiſt me!" ſaid ſhe. The tone of theſe words ſeemed to penetrate the heart of Mrs. Ulric——ſhe too wept——The moment ſeemed favorable, and Ellen holding out the letter to her, looked in her face with a countenance of entreaty that could not be miſunderſtood; it was perfectly intelligible to Mrs. Ulric, but ſhe put the letter back with her hand, and ſhook her head in token of refuſal.

"Let me prevail," ſaid Ellen, joining her hands together.

Mrs. Ulric withdrew a few ſteps.

"I have no hope if you deny me," ſaid Ellen, and threw herſelf on her knees before her.

Greatly moved, Mrs. Ulric ſtooped haſtily to raiſe her.

Again Ellen offered her the letter, but Mrs. Ulric withdrew her hand and walked toward the door.

"Have you no pity?" ſaid Ellen.

The moving tones of her voice ſeemed to ſubdue Mrs. Ulric—ſhe returned—ſhe raiſed Ellen to the ſofa——ſhe took the letter—but opening the drawer of the writing-table, ſhe depoſited the letter there, locked the drawer, and gave Ellen the key.

The calm deciſion of this action robbed Ellen of every hope; ſhe ſat for ſome moments a motionleſs image of deſpair——the blood forſook her lips, and ſhe ſcarcely breathed:

breathed: Mrs. Ulric approached her, ſhe kneeled down before her, ſhe took her hand, and reſpectfully kiſſed it: She ſeemed to ſay, "Unhappy that I am that I cannot do as you wiſh me."

Ellen was not inſenſible, even to this degree of kindneſs. "Cruel Sir William!" exclaimed ſhe, "had you but allowed me to have been underſtood, how eaſily ſhould I have worked upon this worthy woman to have befriended me! But you have indeed taken your meaſures ſecurely; you have indeed known how to make my ruin complete."

Ellen wept bitterly as ſhe pronounced theſe words, and Mrs. Ulric ſeemed ſo affected, that Ellen reſolved to make one more effort to prevail on her to receive her letter. But, as ſhe was about to unlock the drawer, Mrs. Ulric perceiving her intention, placed her hand upon it, and evidently ſhewed her that the attempt would be in vain, and Ellen at length perſuaded that Mrs. Ulric was inexorable only from what ſhe conſidered as a principle of duty, finally gave up the conteſt.

## CHAP. XV.

——"If powers divine
"Behold our human actions *(as they do)*
"I doubt not then, but innocence ſhall make
"Falſe accuſation bluſh, and tyranny
"Tremble at patience."

SHAKESPEARE.

MRS. ULRIC had not the ſhadow of a doubt of Ellen's guilt: Sir William had made it clear to her by a detail of circumſtances that ſeemed to admit but of one explanation. His own diſtreſs, the tender conſideration, which, even in preparing the puniſhment, he had manifeſted for every poſſible conſolation to be adminiſtered to Ellen not incompatible with that puniſhment, had convinced Mrs. Ulric of the ſincerity of his love, and the bitterneſs of his regret, for the meaſures that he thought himſelf obliged to purſue; theſe circumſtances, joined with the agonies ſhe had witneſſed in him, when the moment at laſt came of delivering Ellen into her hands, left her not a ſuſpicion but that a certainty that Ellen was no longer deſerving of his love, could be alone his motive for withdrawing it.

Theſe

Theſe were two points in which Sir William knowingly deceived Mrs. Ulric. He had repreſented to her that even in the puniſhment to which he had doomed Ellen, he had been actuated by motives of mercy—that a much ſeverer fate awaited her from the cuſtoms of her own country, and from the indignation of her parents, and if he were to deliver her to them, not only impriſonment would be her lot, but an impriſonment of a much more rigorous kind, aggravated by darkneſs, faſting, and ſtripes.

Mrs. Ulric did not therefore conſider Sir William only as one of the moſt injured and unfortunate of men, but as one of the moſt compaſſionate and worthy. This deceit had been ſuggeſted from a knowledge of Mrs. Ulric's character, who would never have conſented to become an inſtrument of ſo much injuſtice as was attached to Sir William's conduct, even in the caſe of Ellen's actual guilt; but acting under the error into which ſhe had been betrayed, although the mild and winning manners of Ellen, with the graces of her perſon, and the miſery of her ſituation, made the heart of Mrs. Ulric overflow with the ſofteſt compaſſion, yet did ſhe not look upon her as puniſhed more than her crimes deſerved, or feel inclined to do ought toward reſtoring her to the confidence of a huſband, whom ſhe believed ſhe had ſo grievouſly injured.

In another particular, alſo, Sir William had miſled Mrs. Ulric, and from ſomething of a ſimilar motive, wiſhing by accumulated proofs

of Ellen's guilt to take away the poſſibility at any future moment of her being able to fix any blame upon him in the mind of a perſon on whoſe fidelity he was, after all his precautions, obliged to depend for the final accompliſhment of his purpoſes.

He had therefore ſignified to Mrs. Ulric, that the child of which Ellen was then big, was the offspring of that guilty love, which ſhe was now to expiate by perpetual impriſonment. It therefore happened, that Mrs. Ulric never looked upon Ellen, but that ſhe thought ſhe ſaw an irrefragable proof of her crime; and every effort Ellen made to prove her innocent, Mrs. Ulric conſidered only as attempts either to move compaſſion, or as ſhews of penitence.

This Mrs. Ulric had indeed been the perſonal ſervant of the Bohemian lady, whom Sir William repreſented her to Ellen as having ſerved; but this lady was now dead, nor had ſhe inhabited the houſe where Ellen now was for many years before her death: It belonged to the nobleman her ſon, the intimate friend of Sir William, and, in the preſent circumſtances his only confidant. To him Sir William had communicated firſt his ſuſpicions of Ellen's infidelity, and afterwards his certainty of it; and by him had been ſuggeſted the idea of the nature of the puniſhment to be inflicted—He had pointed out the eligibility of this decayed and ſolitary manſion for the purpoſes of a priſon, and he had repreſented, that in the tried faith and gentle manners of Mrs. Ulric he would find ſuch a

jailoreſs

jailoreſs as he deſired; all he had to do was to convince her of the juſtice and mercy of the plan propoſed, and he might rely upon her integrity without a fear. She was, when Sir William's friend recommended her to him, entirely dependent upon and ſupported by his bounty, and he would willingly undertake any charge with which he would intruſt her, that did not militate againſt her ideas of rectitude.

Sir William had reſolved, in conſequence of what he believed he had aſcertained, during his viſit in Devonſhire, to have removed Ellen abroad immediately after ſhe was ſufficiently recovered from her lying-in to bear ſuch a journey.

But Ellen's conduct in her requiſition to leave town, ſo ſeemingly the reſult of the pureſt integrity, had ſtaggered Sir William's before firm belief in her guilt, and had determined him to make one experiment as to what her reſidence in the country would produce. He had been perfectly perſuaded that the child was not his, and hence his evident diſlike to him when alive, and the ſatisfaction he had ſuffered to eſcape him on his death. But there had been ſuch an unjuſtifiable brutality in his expreſſion on that occaſion, and the effect it had had on Ellen was ſo grievous, that there was nothing that he would not have done to have effaced the impreſſion it had made.

The placability of Ellen's temper had ſoftened his heart: He began to believe he had been miſled by an unfounded jealouſy—he,

began to hope that mutual love might ſpring up between them, and he had nearly forgotten all his ſchemes of revenge and chaſtiſement, when the accidental diſcovery of Henry eſcaping over the hedge of the garden, drove from his mind all doubt of the guilt, and all moderation in the puniſhment of it.

From this moment his whole thoughts were turned to concealing and perfecting the deſigns which he was now reſolute to proſecute to the utmoſt; and to this purpoſe might be referred every thing that he had done from the moment in which he announced to Ellen his intentions of quitting England, to that in which he had followed her with his eyes for the laſt time.

Often indeed had the force of his emotions been too ſtrong for his hypocriſy, but Ellen having no clue to guide her ſuſpicions aright, he had eſcaped detection: She had conſidered what was indeed the breaking forth of his future deſign, but as the remains of a jealouſy with which ſhe was but too well acquainted, and for which ſhe ſometimes hoped a cure from time and the undeviating prudence of her own conduct; and for which, at others, ſhe was ſadly perſuaded there was no cure poſſible.

Often had the fair and candid ſoul of Ellen, which appeared in her every action, made him miſtruſt what he thought was the evidence of his own ſenſes: But the conviction that he owed his preſent perſuaſion only to ſuch evidence diſpelled every doubt, and ſo fully ſettled his belief of the falſhood of Ellen, that he could

could as ſoon have called in queſtion his own exiſtence as her guilt.

Having communicated his final reſolves to his friend, many ſteps preparatory to the execution of his plan, had been taken before his arrival in Saxony, and Ellen's impriſonment was to have commenced with the winter; but when Sir William unexpectedly found her with child, at a time when he could not doubt but that the child was his, his former deſire for an heir to his eſtate, which had had ſo large a ſhare in his determination to marry, returned with freſh force to his mind. But to give a public legitimacy to the infant that Ellen would bring, it was neceſſary that ſhe ſhould be known to have been with child; nor muſt the date of her pretended death take place ſo early as to make it impoſſible that the child, who was ſometime to be produced, could be hers.

Theſe conſiderations prolonged to Ellen the term of her liberty; but though the circumſtances of her pregnancy might delay the time of her being ſhut up, it would in the end facilitate the plan. It was only by a feigned tale of her death that he could hope to put a ſtop to the inquiries of her Engliſh friends; and there was no incident upon which he could found ſuch a tale with equal appearance of probability, as one ſo frequently attended by the moſt ſudden and fatal cataſtrophe. The dangerous ſtate to which Ellen had been reduced in her firſt lying-in would contribute to eſtahliſh the credit of the pretended event of the ſecond.

It was therefore ſettled between Sir William and his friend, that ſhe ſhould remain at Dreſden until within three months of the expected time of her lying-in, that Sir William ſhould then remove to the Saxon village, that he might be ſufficiently near the place of her intended confinement, to ſatisfy himſelf that every preparation neceſſary for it was executed to his wiſhes; and it was agreed, that when ſhe was within a very ſhort period of the time of her being to be brought to bed, ſhe ſhould, under pretence of beginning her journey to Vienna, be conducted thither.

The tale that Sir William meant to tell was, that being ſeized unexpectedly with the pains of labour, at an obſcure Inn on the road to Vienna, ſhe had there expired.

Sir William had ſome fears that the agitation and grief which Ellen would unavoidably undergo, when ſhe found the heavy deſtiny that awaited her through the reſt of her life, might prove prejudicial to the ſafety of the child; but he had alſo almoſt equal hopes that the conſideration of this circumſtance might operate to inſpiring her with a greater degree of patience, than ſhe would otherwiſe be able to aſſume:——And theſe hopes, that were founded upon the excellence of Ellen's character, were not vain.

It was Sir William's intention to linger near the ſpot of Ellen's confinement until ſhe was brought to bed, and when he was informed of the conſequences of that event, then to diſmiſs her from his ſolicitude for ever,

and

and make all the advance he could in the road of forgetfulneſs.

That no circumſtance might hereafter obtrude Ellen upon his memory, he gave his friend, on whoſe integrity he had a perfect reliance, power to draw upon him for any ſum neceſſary to defray the expences of her eſtabliſhment, and he appointed an agent at Dreſden, who was to be paid by the Bohemian nobleman, to furniſh every thing that Ellen might require. To authenticate her requiſitions, which he had ſignified to her were to be written in French, nothing more was neceſſary than the ſignature of Mrs. Ulric.

Mrs. Ulric had therefore no immediate intercourſe with Sir William, and had ſhe been inclined to have favored Ellen's cauſe, ſhe would not only have had Sir William's reſentment to have overcome, but the reluctance of her late maſter, who ſhe knew concurred in all that Sir William had done, and applauded the juſtice and mercy of his proceedings.

Mrs. Ulric had been directed to inform Sir William, through the channel of this nobleman, how Ellen bore the firſt ſhock of her misfortune; and however favorable this report might be, it was very unlikely that the friend of Sir William ſhould take any ſtep towards reconciling him to a wife, of whoſe guilt he was perfectly ſatisfied.

Mrs. Ulric had made a faithful repreſentation of Ellen's mildneſs, moderation, and patience; but imputing the whole to penitence,

tence, ſhe led both Sir William and his friend to believe that Ellen had been ſufficiently explicit in the marks of this contrition, to furniſh, if that had been neceſſary, freſh proofs of her former guilt. Sir William, therefore, however miſerable, was far from repenting the ſtep he had taken. He had truly ſaid, "I am deaf to the voice of penitence." To forgive was not in his nature, and nothing but the conviction of Ellen's innocence would have induced him to have reſtored her to liberty, and from this conviction he was farther removed than ever.

## CHAP. XVI.

" Stone walls do not a priſon make,
" Nor iron bars a cage ;
" Minds innocent and quiet, take
" That for a hermitage."

LOVELACE.

WHEN Ellen found all the hopes ſhe had entertained vain, of being able to move Mrs. Ulric in her favour, ſhe began to turn her thoughts upon ſome other individual that might probably make a part of the houſehold.

She had hitherto ſeen only one other perſon, and ſhe ſoon found that the houſe contained no more ; this was a hale ſtout country girl, with an open good humoured countenance, and though the being totally without the means of applying to the intereſted feelings of ſuch an one was an obſtacle to her ſucceſs, that in circumſtances which admitted of any other hope Ellen would have conſidered as invincible, hers was not a ſituation where even great difficulties ought to diſcourage her, and ſhe reſolved to make the attempt. She hoped, by the courteouſneſs of her manners to conciliate the girl's good will, and ſhe ſometimes flattered herſelf that precaution had not been ſo unremittingly awoke as to have extended to an ignorant girl, whom it was known ſhe could not bribe, the prohibition

hibition as to receiving any letter from her hands; ſhe had no doubt but that ſhe, like Mrs. Ulric, ſpoke only German, and had therefore no hope of moving her by argument.

By having attended cloſely to the words Mrs. Ulric always uſed to herſelf, when ſhe ſought to induce her to any compliance, ſhe thought herſelf miſtreſs of one phraſe of intreaty in a language that would be underſtood; and armed with this piece of rhetoric, and a letter in her hand, ſhe one day accoſted the damſel. But what was her aſtoniſhment and almoſt horror, when with a broad ſtare of incomprehenſion ſhe was anſwered in ſounds more uncooth and unintelligible than had ever before met her ears.

Ellen ſhrunk back, and hope died within her when ſhe found this freſh impediment to the ſucceſs of her plans; for ſhe eaſily comprehended that the girl was a true-born Bohemian, and ſpoke only her native Sclavonian.

The many plans that Ellen had laid to gain the attention of this girl, and the various ſchemes that ſhe had adopted and rejected as likely means, or as being impoſſible to engage her compaſſion, and explain her own wiſhes to her, had ſo fully occupied her mind for ſome days, that ſhe had had leſs leiſure to reflect upon her actual ſituation. In the hopes of liberty ſhe loſt, for a time, a ſenſe of her reſtraint, and when, by the diſcovery of the impoſſibility of making the girl comprehend her, theſe hopes ſeemed to ſhrink to nothing

thing, a new, and even a more lively intereſt prevented her from feeling the whole weight of her diſappointment.

She had received thoſe preparations for her approaching indiſpoſition that Sir William had promiſed her in his letter, and ſhe buſied herſelf in arranging every thing relative to that period. This ſubject being fully in her mind, ſhe naturally reverted to the ray of hope which Sir William himſelf ſeemed to allow the birth of a child afforded her. She endeavoured to diſcover the true meaning of the words he had uſed.

It was evident that he was perſuaded the child was his own, and under this perſuaſion it was but too likely he would not ſuffer it to remain in her care. In the caſe of its being removed from her, what hope could ſpring from its exiſtence to gild her future life?—When Sir William had once announced her death to her friends, (and by a ſtory of her death ſhe naturally concluded he could alone conceal her impriſonment) he had put it out of his own power, without affixing an indelible reproach upon himſelf, to reſtore her to the world; and however probable ſhe might think it that he would defer ſuch an annunciation, 'till after the expected period of her lying-in, which was well known to her Engliſh friends, as a ſecurity againſt any doubt of the legitimacy of the child he might produce, yet ſhe felt it nearly impoſſible that he ſhould delay it longer. What good then could ſhe derive from becoming the mother of an

infant,

infant, who, under theſe ſuppoſitions, would be ignorant of her very exiſtence.

If Sir William therefore really foreſaw any advantage poſſible to accrue to her from the birth of the child, it muſt be his having determined, under ſome circumſtances, to leave it to her care. But when ſhe recalled the earneſt wiſh he had formerly expreſſed for an heir, and the very evident eare he took to preſerve the exiſtence of the unborn infant, ſhe could not for a moment indulge a hope that this would be the caſe if the child were a boy. The hope, therefore, that in ſo doubtful a manner he had endeavoured to inſpire her with, ſeemed to reſt upon one of theſe two ſuppoſitions: Either that he had ſuggeſted it merely as a means to quiet the firſt exceſſes of her grief, without any intention of its being followed by any real good to her; or, that if the child proved a girl, he did in truth purpoſe to leave her in poſſeſſion of it. To this latter poſſibility ſhe clung with a fond partiality, as to the only ſource of happineſs that remained to her on this ſide the grave.

The more ſhe conſidered the matter the more ſhe perſuaded herſelf it was probable, and the more it appeared probable, the more it became neceſſary to her. Soon her mind could admit of no other idea. The gloom of the priſon ſeemed to clear up, its ſolitude to diſappear; wherever ſhe turned her eyes this little girl was before her; ſhe ſaw it in the helpleſs fatuity of the firſt weeks of its life; ſhe marked the firſt ſmile of intelligence that ſpark-

ſparkled in its eyes; ſhe beheld the firſt ſymptoms of deſign in its actions; ſhe heard the firſt half formed articulate ſound that eſcaped from its lips; in imagination ſhe began the taſk of inſtruction, and beheld her moſt arduous efforts repaid a thouſand fold, by having gained a companion and a friend.

If ſuch an illuſory progreſſion of but too often unrealiſed bliſs fills the breaſt of every tender and reflecting female, when about to become a mother, and communicates a ſenſe of happineſs, unfelt and unimagined in every other circumſtance, even in the moſt proſperous life, with what trembling tranſport muſt the deſolated Ellen contemplate a bleſſing that would be her only one! How muſt ſhe prize a poſſeſſion that was to be her *all* of joy? And how muſt her heart grow cold as ſhe thought this bleſſing might be withheld from her—that this poſſeſſion might be ſnatched from her arms.

But that all this fabric of happineſs ſhould depend upon the ſex of her child, when her heart was diſpoſed to love equally a boy or girl, pointed to her apprehenſion the peculiar wretchedneſs of her fate, the circumſtances of which could ſuſpend the moſt natural affections of the ſoul, and render it doubtful whether a mother ſhould view the face of her offſpring with pleaſure.

A ſhort period brought the matter to an iſſue, and Ellen was delivered of a daughter. Ellen claſped the infant to her heart, and forgot for a moment her captivity; the next ſhe feared to loſe what ſhe ſo highly prized.

Thoſe

Thoſe reaſonings which had before appeared ſo concluſively to inſure her the undiſturbed poſſeſſion of a daughter, now ſeemed weak and unſatisfactory—ſhe doubted where ſhe had before been certain—ſhe feared where ſhe had hoped.

In the mean time ſhe recovered her health much faſter than could have been hoped, and fully occupied in nurſing her little girl, the days paſſed eaſily. She began to believe that Sir William had ceaſed to think either of her or his child, and truſting in the viciſſitude which time always produces, ſhe ſoothed her mind with the diſtant hope that a period would arrive when ſhe ſhould be reſtored to thoſe ſhe loved.

Could ſhe have found any means of informing her family and friends of her ſituation, ſhe would have been far from feeling her preſent lot as an unhappy one; it was the thought of what they would ſuffer on her ſuppoſed death that at this time formed her bitteſt reflections. Removed from the perpetual ill humour and injurious ſuſpicions of Sir William, miſtreſs of her time and her employments, holding in her arms, or nouriſhing at her breaſt the dear object of her tendereſt affections, ſhe experienced a degree of calm ſatisfaction that had long been a ſtranger to her mind—that mind unclouded by ſelf-reproach, undiſtracted by ſelfiſh ſolicitudes, repoſed itſelf in peace on the protection of a providence, whoſe wiſdom it could not doubt, and of whoſe goodneſs it was aſſured.

Three

Three months were now fully paſt ſince the birth of Ellen's daughter, and to the partial apprehenſions of the mother was already become a very intereſting companion. Ellen believed, or thought ſhe believed, that there were none of her actions that the child did not underſtand, and ſhe was more than repaid the compliment by undoubtedly underſtanding all that the child did.

Ellen now wanted no other companion. To Mary ſhe talked, and to Mary ſhe ſung; ſhe held her in her arms all day, and when ſhe had placed her in her crib for the night, ſhe drew her chair cloſe to it, and with her eyes fixed more upon the face of the child, than upon the book ſhe held in her hand and imagined that ſhe read. The fear that her treaſure ſhould be ſnatched from her now ſeldom obtruded itſelf, every paſſing day took away from the probability of its being realized; if it occurred, ſhe was tempted to conſider it as an ungrateful doubting of the benevolence of providence, and ſhe repreſſed as faulty all thoughts that led to it.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XVII.

"Oh you bleſſed miniſters above,
"Steep me in patience."

SHAKESPEARE.

IN this ſtate of contentment and ſecurity was Ellen, when one morning as ſhe was engaged in ſuckling her child, Mrs. Ulric entered; Ellen raiſed her eyes towards her, and was immediately ſtruck with the ſadneſs of her countenance. Ellen, who in holding her child in her arms, felt that all the treaſure ſhe had on earth was ſecure, thought not of herſelf; ſhe held out her hand to Mrs. Ulric, and longed for words to inquire into the cauſe of her grief, and to offer her conſolation; but, alas! ſhe was herſelf the true object of compaſſion. Mrs. Ulric ſat down by her ſide, ſhe ſighed, and taking the infant from her, delivered her a letter.

Ellen caſt her eyes on the ſuperſcription, ſhe knew Sir William's hand, and ſhe anticipated in a moment all he had to ſay to her; the blood forſook her lips, ſhe became ſick, and her whole frame trembled ſo extremely, that it was with difficulty ſhe opened the letter, —theſe were its contents:

"I am

"I am willing to perſuade myſelf that my preſent deſign will meet with a ready acquieſcence from you. The perſon who delivers this letter has orders to take charge of my daughter; ſhe will be conveyed to me with every ſolicitous attention to her ſafety and convenience, that you could yourſelf dictate. I believe, that as your good ſenſe will withhold you from any oppoſition to this plan, which you muſt be convinced will ultimately prove fruitleſs, ſo I am perſuaded your humanity is ſuch, as to take from you all ſelfiſh deſire to make this innocent victim of your miſconduct, a partaker of your puniſhment. When ſeparated from you, ſhe will be in the full enjoyment of every bleſſing a father's affection can beſtow, and you ſurely cannot but wiſh that her cheek may for ever remain untinged by a ſenſe of your ſhame, and her heart unwounded by a knowledge of your afflictions. If your heart ſadden with the thought that you will never behold her more, be conſoled by the aſſurance that from this period I ſhall promote her happineſs even at the expence of my own. For a meaſure ſo conſonant to the beſt intereſts of your offſpring, no apology appears neceſſary, and for the manner in which I ſee proper to diſpoſe of my own, I do not conceive I owe you any: With every wiſh however for the perfect reſtoration of peace to your boſom, I now bid you finally and for ever farewell."

"Never, never," ſaid Ellen, wildly ſnatching the infant from Mrs. Ulric, "will I part with my child; go, go and tell his agent ſo."

Together

Together they may force us from this place, but never ſhall they ſeparate us."

Mrs. Ulric was prepared for the tears and the grief of Ellen, but the wildneſs of her air, and the determined tone of her voice ſurpriſed and diſconcerted her.

"Ah! Madam," ſaid ſhe, "would you have this poor innocent remain a perpetual priſoner with you?"

As ſhe ſpoke ſhe fixed her eyes upon the child, with a look of the tendereſt compaſſion. The ſound of her voice, and her action ſmote upon Ellen's heart, ſhe burſt into tears.

"No," rejoined Mrs. Ulric, "you are too good," and ſhe attempted to take the child from her, but Ellen claſping it to her breaſt, ruſhed into the next room, and faſtened the door. Here, in a tumult of paſſion, which for ſome time ſuſpended every power of reaſon, Ellen wept over her infant in all the bitterneſs of diſtraction and deſpair. But in the abodes where virtue is accuſtomed to preſide, the uſurpation of paſſion can be of no long duration. Ellen was not ſo loſt in ſelf as to forget her child, and no ſooner did her heart acknowledge the cruelty there might be in a wiſh to detain her with her, than her part was taken, but it was with a pang, far exceeding his, who in his haſte to eſcape from immediate danger, deſtroys with his own hand that property, on which alone all his future hopes of happineſs depend, that Ellen reſolved to part with her daughter. Never had ſhe felt a miſery ſo inſupportable, and which ſeemed ſo entirely to drive reaſon from her ſeat, as the

the thought that ſhe beheld, for the laſt time, this object ſo beloved, inflicted. To be reſtored to ſociety and reputation, now became a hundred fold more important to her than ever, and the deſpair of ever being able to accompliſh a purpoſe, now ſo momentous, drove her to the point of diſtraction—ſuddenly a gleam of hope burſt through this gloom.

"My infant ſhall be the bearer of a letter to her father," ſaid Ellen; "if I can but once induce him to hear me, I muſt be juſtified.' At this thought the turbulence of her paſſions ſubſided, ſhe became calm. "Who can tell," cried ſhe, freſh hope kindling in her heart, "but that theſe are the very means a merciful God, who never forgets his creatures ſufferings, has appointed for my deliverance."

Ellen ſoon afterwards appeared before Mrs. Ulric, who eaſily comprehended by the ſettled, calm, and deep ſorrow, that had taken place of a violence ſo unuſual, that Ellen was diſpoſed to ſubmit to the commands of Sir William; Ellen, however, by never quitting her child for a moment, and by evidently keeping over it a jealous and ſuſpicious watch, ſhewed that ſhe meant not to part with it immediately. Mrs. Ulric was willing to wait at leaſt till the next day before ſhe took any forcible means to deprive her of it; and ſo far their intentions agreed, that Ellen had no deſign of retaining it longer with her than till the next morning. This night, this laſt night that ſhe might ever embrace it, when the hour of its repoſe came, ſhe placed it, not as uſual into its crib, but holding it on her knees, there

there lulled it to ſleep. In this poſture, with her heart filled with deſpair, and her eyes overflowing with the bittereſt tears that ever woman ſhed, ſhe wrote the following letter to Sir William.

"To the voice of reaſon and of humanity may my heart never be deaf, though in obeying their dictates that heart ſhould cleave in twain."

"I deliver my daughter to you, becauſe ſhe is yours; alſo and becauſe I wiſh not for any alleviation to my ſorrows, that muſt ariſe from my aſſociating her in my misfortune: But whatever may be her deſtiny, as to happineſs, or miſery, ſhe *cannot* be the victim of my crimes, for *I am guiltleſs*—the angels of heaven are not more free of the crime of which you accuſe me, than I am."

"You have ſaid, you liſten not to the voice of penitence: It is not the voice of penitence, it is the cry of innocence that aſſails you, an innocence as ſpotleſs, in all that relates to you, as that of the babe who now looks upon you, and bids you do juſtice to her injured mother."

"I am unable to underſtand the circumſtances upon which you have condemned me, I can therefore make no defence except you will explain yourſelf farther: Be juſt alike to yourſelf and me—ſee me—hear me—I aſk not this as a favor from your pity, or your love, I demand it as a right, I demand it in compaſſion to you, as well as myſelf. My ruin involves your condemnation: I would preſerve you from too late a repentance: Refuſe

fuſe not to liſten to this ſolicitation; conſidering the precautions you have taken, it is the laſt that can ever reach you. It is the ſolicitation, I muſt ſpeak out, for who have I to ſpeak for me, of ſuffering virtue, of oppreſſed innocence, of wounded juſtice. Oh! Sir William, when I offer ſo cruel a ſacrifice to the rights you aſſert over me, deny me not that which the moſt abject criminal may exact."

Ellen continued to hold her infant on her knees, and to gaze on its face through the whole of this diſtreſsful night, without the power of cloſing her eyes, or loſing in forgetfulneſs the ſenſe of her wretchedneſs for one ſingle moment. When the morning dawned the infant awoke, Ellen put it to her breaſt. "Deareſt of human creatures," ſaid ſhe, preſſing it cloſely to her, "and do I give thee ſuſtenance for the laſt time? Oh! my God, enable me to ſupport a deprivation ſo cruel!"

Ellen then proceeded to dreſs her child, and ſewing up the letter ſhe deſigned for Sir William in a piece of cloth, ſhe faſtened it under the upper veſt of the infant. To have endeavoured to have conveyed it by any other means ſhe was aſſured would have been fruitleſs, but ſhe perſuaded herſelf that nothing could be more certain than that whoever found a paper directed to Sir William in the clothes of his child, would carefully deliver it to him; and ſhe thought it very improbable that the perſon appointed to convey the child, and who would not have ſeen her,

ſhould have received any prohibition as to forwarding any letter from her; and even if ſuch a prohibition had been given, it would hardly appear a diſregard of it to deliver a paper found upon the perſon of the child e writer of which could at moſt only be gueſſed at. Theſe conſiderations tranquillized her as to the delivery of the letter; but the reception it would meet with, and the effect it would produce, were matters of much more doubtful event.

Conſcious of her own innocence, Ellen's firſt thoughts had led her to believe that it was only neceſſary to be heard to make this innocence evident; and from the ſame purity of mind ſhe had felt a perfect confidence that Sir William's conduct originated rather from miſtaken ideas of the puniſhment due to the crime he ſuppoſed her to be guilty of, than from any juſtifiable reſentment for that want of love on her part, of which he was accuſtomed to complain, but which he muſt be convinced aroſe wholly from his own unkindneſs towards her.

More reflection had introduced ideas into her mind much leſs favorable to Sir William. She could not imagine any circumſtances from which ſuch a miſtake, as that on which ſhe had ſuppoſed Sir William to act, could have ariſen: The appeal which he made to the evidence of his own ſenſes ſtrengthened the ſuſpicion of unfair dealing on his part; and it had received additional force by the unneceſſary cruelty which there appeared in his ſo carefully ſhutting from her all means of making

making any application to him; and in the unfeeling harſhneſs diſcoverable in more parts than one of his laſt letter.

Added to theſe conſiderations, were others that ſeemed ſcarcely leſs to militate againſt the hopes of her deliverance; ſhe knew well the ſtructure of Sir William's mind—ſhe knew how little ſhe had to hope from his generoſity or candour——ſhe knew the pertinacity with which he adhered to all his opinions; the reluctance that he felt to acknowledge himſelf miſtaken in the mereſt trifles; and ſhe could hardly flatter herſelf that if he *were* convinced that he had fallen into an error, that he would act from ſuch a conviction, when by ſo doing he muſt ſo painfully eſtabliſh her ſuperiority, and place himſelf for the reſt of their lives in the light of the offending party. As ſhe was aware how impoſſible it would be to perſuade him that ſhe really and in fact was capable of forgiving, and baniſhing from her mind a ſenſe of the injuries he had done her, and as ſhe knew he would feel aſſured that he muſt never hope to poſſeſs her love, ſhe but too reaſonably concluded, that, if even any love for her remained, it would not be ſufficiently powerful to induce him to reſtore her to ſociety under circumſtances ſo diſgracefully humiliating, and ſo little happy to himſelf.

Theſe reflections would probably have had influence enough to have prevented any attempt on her part towards moving Sir William in her favour, and might have put her upon turning her thoughts to ſome more cer-

tain though more diſtant means of deliverance, if the inſupportable agony that ſhe felt on the threatened loſs of her child had not made her conſider all delay, in the hopes of rejoining it, a lengthened torture of ſo acute a kind, that ſhe doubted her own inability to endure it with tolerable patience.

This feeling, and the reflection that if ſhe now omitted any one poſſible means of declaring her innocence, it might hereafter be urged as a remiſſneſs ariſing from conſcious guilt, had determined her to try the fate of a letter to Sir William: But although in her preſent circumſtances, this was *all* ſhe could do, ſo little did it appear likely to anſwer the purpoſe, that it was wholly efficacious in abating that miſery which the idea of ſeparation from her child had impreſſed upon her mind; and when the letter was written and depoſited under the infant's clothes, a melancholy ſenſe of its probable inutility filled her breaſt, and gave to the approaching deprivation all the horrors due to a farewel, which, as to this world, was to be final.

Ellen, notwithſtanding the oppreſſion of her feelings, wiſhed to conquer herſelf ſo far as to do that which ſhe had reſolved to do with dignity and compoſure.

The opening and ſhutting of the doors in the gallery now told her ſhe might expect the approach of Mrs. Ulric every moment; her eyes were alternately fixed on the face of her child, and now turned with a look of apprehenſion to the door; ſhe preſſed her lips to thoſe of the poor baby, with a fervency that

that at any other time ſhe would not have dared to have indulged from the fear of hurting it: Every kiſs imprinted ſhe thought was to be the laſt, and as ſhe intently gazed upon its features, ſhe kiſſed each ſeparately, with a ſenſation of deſpair which ought only to belong to the guilty. Happy was it for the intellects of Ellen that this ſcene was not much farther prolonged.

Mrs. Ulric came towards her, and Ellen riſing haſtily with an effort that required all her fortitude, put the child into her arms and ruſhed from her into the next room. Mrs. Ulric, ſtruck with her courage, and moved by the tendereſt compaſſion, committed the infant to the care of thoſe who already waited to receive it, and then haſtened back with all the diſpatch in her power, to adminiſter to Ellen all the conſolation that her humanity could afford—but Ellen remained long inſenſible to her kindneſs and her cares. Mrs. Ulric found her on her return in the higheſt ſtate of hyſteric affection: the diſorder baffled all remedies Mrs. Ulric's ſkill in medicine could ſuggeſt, and continued ſo long unſubdued as to raiſe in her mind very ſerious apprehenſions.

At length nature ſeemed quite exhauſted, and Ellen fell into a heavy ſleep, which continued for ſome hours; when ſhe awoke ſhe was leſs agitated, but ſo extremely reduced in ſtrength as to be unable to quit her bed, or ſcarcely to raiſe her head from her pillow.

She continued for ſome time ſubject to returns of the hyſterical diſorder, and when ſhe appeared to be recovered from theſe attacks, ſhe was ſeized with a depreſſion of ſpirits, that incapacitated her from all exertion, and ſeemed to deprive her even of the power of thinking.

Mrs. Ulric conceived nothing more likely to remove this kind of indiſpoſition than the open air, and a variety of objects: the latter it was not in her power, to any extent, to afford her unhappy patient; but ſhe accompanied her for whole days in the garden, where ſhe often induced her to continue by ſpreading a repaſt under the ſhade of the trees, or by bringing her the harp, and intimating a deſire to hear her play upon it. Ellen was not loſt to the pleaſure of obliging; and in the preſent ſtate of her mind, having no deſires of her own, ſhe ſeemed wholly directed by thoſe of her companion. Mrs. Ulric, ſomewhat to vary the ſcene, ventured to unlock the garden door, and to walk ſome little way into the adjacent country: The door opened upon a wildiſh heath, which was ſkirted by a thick wood, and in this wood they frequently walked. Inſenſibly this wiſe and gentle treatment produced the deſired effect; Ellen began to awake as it were from the lethargy into which ſhe had fallen, her powers of reaſoning returned, and if ſhe felt more, ſhe acknowledged that a ſtate of ſo alarming an inſenſibility was well exchanged for one of ſuffering. The firſt reflection ſhe made was on the

the length of time that had elapſed ſince the departure of her child, and when ſhe found that ſix weeks were gone, never more to return, ſhe gave up all hopes of receiving her deliverance from the juſtice or generoſity of Sir William.

How he might have been affected if the letter had reached his hands, it is not poſſible to ſay, but the trial was never made; and Ellen owed the loſs of this feeble chance in her favor neither to deſign or treachery, but merely to accident.

The circumſtance of any paper being concealed in the piece of cloth which Ellen had faſtened round the body of the child, had eſcaped the notice of its attendant; ſhe had taken it merely for a part of its garments, and with the reſt of them having been ſent to the waſher-woman, Ellen's letter, in fragments and defaced, floated ſoon upon the water.

As Ellen had never attached much hope to this attempt to move Sir William in her favor, ſhe viewed the total diſappointment of it without any of thoſe acute feelings that might probably have precipitated her again into the melancholy ſtate of mind from which ſhe had only began to emerge, and it might indeed be owing to her feelings being blunted as it were, by what ſhe had undergone, that ſhe bore what ſhe conſidered as an undeniable proof of Sir William's premeditated injuſtice ſo calmly.

## CHAP. XVIII.

" But there is yet a liberty unſung
" By poets, and by ſenators unpraiſed,
" Which monarchs cannot grant, nor all the pow'rs
" Of earth and hell confederate, take away:
" 'Tis liberty of heart."

COWPER.

EVERY day Ellen began to recover her faculties, and ſhe uſed every means in her power to rouſe herſelf to exertion, and to train her mind to fortitude. Patience and reſignation, thought ſhe, are all the virtues that I am permitted to practiſe—In the firſt moments of my overwhelming affliction I was ſaved, by inſenſibilty, from the neceſſity of an exertion, that it might have been impoſſible to have made; for what I then failed in I am not reſponſible; I am now called to make uſe of the reaſon that is reſtored to me, and let me attend to the call: That life is a blank which is unmarked with the efforts of virtue, but it is a blank that I ſhall be called to account for in another.

In conſequence of theſe reflections Ellen began, for the firſt time, to turn her attention to her books. She found the collection well choſen, and evidently with attention to her peculiar taſte; this circumſtance ſoftened her heart toward

toward Sir William: Some few that ſhe wiſhed to have were wanting; ſhe wrote down the names, and delivering the liſt to Mrs. Ulric, ſaw her ſign the paper; ſhe readily underſtood that this was the proof agreed upon, by which its authenticity was to be aſcertained: She obſerved, however, that Mrs. Ulric carefully inſpected the articles, and Ellen ſuppoſed ſhe was inſtructed, notwithſtanding her ignorance of the French language, how to diſtinguiſh between what was allowed and what was forbidden: Books however had been expreſsly named by Sir William, as what would be conſidered as a lawful requiſition, and Ellen was therefore not ſurpriſed to find herſelf ſpeedily ſupplied with what ſhe wanted. As this however was the firſt experiment of the kind ſhe had made, ſhe felt a ſenſible pleaſure in its ſucceſs; there was ſomething in it that connected her again with the world, from which, before, ſhe ſeemed ſo totally excluded; and when ſhe found, with a certainty, that by the ſtroke of her pen ſhe could procure any gratification, or neceſſary that ſhe wanted, ſhe no longer felt herſelf abandoned to the degree ſhe had done before.

The evenings now grew long and the days cold, ſhe lived more in the houſe, and conſequently wanted a greater variety of employments there; ſhe had no call for works either of ornament or uſe; with reſpect to her clothes ſhe was ſupplied with a greater profuſion than ſhe had any neceſſity for; they were all, it is true, of the plaineſt kind, and ſuch as, (though they were perfectly comfortable to her) could not be converted into bribes to thoſe about her. To work without any end, would defeat her

purpoſe; for how could ſhe be intereſted in the progreſs of an employment, which in the end muſt be uſeleſs? and ſhe found books and muſic were not ſufficient to carry her through wet and gloomy days, ſucceeded by long and tempeſtuous evenings, without the aid of converſation or exerciſe.

In this deſtitution of employment her mind preyed too much upon itſelf, and when her imagination repreſented to her the diſtreſs of her family and friends for her loſs; or when ſhe thought of her own captivity, cut off in her early youth from every ſocial affection, and from every active duty; but, above all, when ſhe reflected upon her ſeparation from her child, ſhe found the taſk of reſignation almoſt beyond her power.

Anxiouſly ſhe caſt her eyes around for ſome means of filling her time and employing her thoughts; happily it occurred to her that part of her Northumberland education had been the art of ſpinning: No ſooner did ſhe recollect this than ſhe ſet about procuring a wheel, and every neceſſary to her employment. She knew the perfection that the Bohemian linens were brought to, and therefore concluded ſhe ſhould find all the aſſiſtance to her manufacture that ſhe could deſire. She found her orders for a wheel as ſpeedily complied with as had been the one ſhe gave for books, and ſhe began her new occupation without delay.

Mrs. Ulric ſeemed highly pleaſed when ſhe ſaw her thus employed, and buſied herſelf in removing any trifling difficulties that aroſe

aroſe. This new intereſt produced a freſh tie between them; Mrs. Ulric frequently brought her work, and paſſed the whole evening with Ellen: It is true, they could not converſe, but they had by this time eſtabliſhed a kind of language between themſelves, that ſerved extremely well for all common purpoſes; and Ellen had even attained the knowledge of the meaning and the pronunciation of ſeveral German words.

This knowledge, however, ſhe acquired againſt the inclination of Mrs. Ulric, for Ellen eaſily perceived that ſhe ſeemed to be ſorry when any word had eſcaped her, and the pertinacity with which ſhe always declined repeating any word that Ellen endeavoured to pronounce after her, and her apparent wilful miſconception whenever Ellen took any means of inducing her to teach her in German the names of thoſe objects with which they were ſurrounded, made it clear to Ellen that ſhe lay under the ſtricteſt poſſible prohibition as to teaching her the language, and ſhe ſaw that ſhe adhered to her orders with an integrity that all her attachment to Ellen, and the pleaſure that it muſt be ſuppoſed ſhe would naturally have taken in converſing with her, could not ſhake.

Ellen revered Mrs. Ulric the more for this ſteady adherence to what, ſhe had no doubt was with her a point of duty, and ſhe eaſily forgave the effect in conſideration of the cauſe, though the dreary melancholy of her life was ſo beyond meaſure increaſed by this very circumſtance. Had it not been for thoſe

ſcruples

ſcruples in Mrs. Ulric, nothing could have been more eaſy than for Ellen to have learnt German, and as ſhe never loſt ſight of the hope of acquiring the language, as one moſt eſſential means to bring about her deliverance; ſhe treaſured up in her memory all that ſhe had learnt from Mrs. Ulric, and in ſpite of her precaution, ſhe added almoſt daily ſomething to her ſtore.

The winter paſſed away, the ſpinning plan had ſucceeded fully, and Ellen now began to intereſt herſelf about the cloth that was to be ſent to the weaver, and that which was to be returned from him; ſhe could not ſometimes help ſmiling at the artificial buſineſs ſhe had contrived for herſelf, and at the perfect earneſtneſs in which ſhe ſaw Mrs. Ulric about the matter; but ſhe carefully avoided deſtroying the illuſion, and went on ſpinning as if her web were to be as long as Penelope's might have been, but for "the backward labours of her hand."

Ellen's health was now thoroughly re-eſtabliſhed, and ſhe endeavoured to add a degree of cheerfulneſs to the patience and reſignation ſhe had hitherto practiſed. By frequently repeating to herſelf all the German ſhe could pick up from her companion, her thoughts were more than ever fixed upon the language, and with ſo few circumſtances to divert them from any object, which even from a ſlight motive might have engaged them, it is not wonderful if they were almoſt inceſſantly bent upon one, from which ſo important

ant an advantage might be gained——— to attain the German language became now the firſt wiſh of Ellen's mind, and ſhe was reſolved to take ſome vigorous ſtep towards it.

She had hitherto forborn to ſend for the books neceſſary to her inſtruction, as far as it was poſſible ſhe could inſtruct herſelf, from an apprehenſion that this was a requeſt upon which Mrs. Ulric would infallibly put a negative: But obſerving that Mrs. Ulric now ſeldom caſt her eye over the articles contained in the liſts ſhe ſigned, ſhe reſolved to hazard the attempt.

Amongſt ſeveral other things which ſhe ſent for, only with the deſign of making the liſt larger, that ſo any particular article might more probably paſs unnoticed, ſhe put down all the German books ſhe thought neceſſary to her purpoſe. She delivered this liſt to Mrs. Ulric the next time ſhe viſited her apartment; it was with no ſmall degree of ſolicitude ſhe attended its fate, but ſhe had the ſatisfaction to ſee it ſigned without heſitation, or inſpection, and inſtantly ſealed and directed, by which diſpatch ſhe concluded that ſome immediate means of ſending it to Dreſden, and ſhe was confirmed in this conjecture by the ſpeed with which ſhe received the pacquet in return. And now, for the firſt time ſhe had a ſecret from Mrs. Ulric, ſhe carefully locked up her German treaſure, and took care to ſecure the door of her room whenever ſhe recurred to the ſtudy of that language.

language. It was with the greateſt aſſiduity that ſhe purſued her taſk, but without ſome oral aſſiſtance ſhe ſoon ſaw cauſe to fear that ſhe ſhould make no progreſs that could be uſeful to the great purpoſe, for which alone at this time, ſhe had thought of acquiring the knowledge of the German tongue. She found, however, an incidental advantage in her new ſtudy; this was employment, and German for a time ſuperſeded ſpinning.

In theſe ſeveral occupations, diverſified with muſic and cheſs, in which ſhe had diſcovered Mrs. Ulric to be ſomewhat of a proficient, with a regular courſe of reading, and in the regulation of her own mind, ſupported with a vague hope that at ſome diſtant period her deliverance might make a part of the deſigns of Providence, Ellen paſſed her time; and ſuch was the tranquillity that the innocence of her heart and the equanimity of her temper ſecured to her, under the deprivation of nearly all that is ſuppoſed to make life deſirable, that not only ſhe enjoyed a degree of happineſs unknown to the moſt proſperous guilt, but ſuch as is unattainable even in the over eager purſuit of the moſt legitimate objects: Her mind was calm and vigorous, her body healthy and active, the roſes, which even the chagrins of the firſt months of her marriage had baniſhed, returned to her cheeks, her eyes recovered their vivacity, her well formed limbs acquired all their natural agility, and perhaps Ellen had never in the whole courſe of her life appear-

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ed an object ſo proper to excite love and admiration as ſhe did at this preſent period ——and muſt it be, that ſuch a roſe is doomed for ever

" To waſte its ſweetneſs on the deſert air."

CHAP.

## CHAP. XIX.

" Sweet is the breath of vernal ſhower,
" The bee's collected treaſure ſweet,
" Sweet muſic's melting fall; but ſweeter yet
" The ſtill ſmall voice of gratitude."

GRAY.

TWO years were now paſſed, and a third far advanced, ſince Ellen entered the walls of this dreary habitation: No change ſeemed to await her; and amidſt the never-ceaſing viciſſitude of human affairs her fate alone ſeeemed fixed, as if the grave indeed had incloſed her. But he who could break the bonds of death, was not impotent to open the doors of her priſon.

About this period Mrs. Ulric fell ill, and her illneſs proved a rheumatic fever. Ellen attended her with all the aſſiduity that affection and gratitude could inſpire; ſhe furniſhed her chamber with every poſſible accommodation, from her own, ſhe frequently paſſed the night by her bed ſide, and thought nothing painful to herſelf that could contribute to alleviate the pains of Mrs. Ulric.

It was in her frequent viſits to the chamber of the invalid, that Ellen firſt obſerved that the under ſervant had been changed, and

and that her ſucceſſor was a German. To this perſon, as Mrs. Ulric was entirely incapable of attending upon Ellen herſelf, devolved all the duties of waiting upon her at her meals, or adminiſtering to her any little ſervices ſhe might want: Ellen obſerved that ſhe performed all this with ſomething more than a common zeal to oblige; that ſhe appeared pleaſed to be employed; and often lingered in her apartments without any apparent reaſon: Ellen imputed all this to the natural good-humour of the girl, who might probably be moved by the ſtate of captivity which ſhe could not but know ſhe was in. It occurred to her that ſhe might turn this compaſſion to ſomewhat better advantage than merely having her dinner warmer, or more nicely ſerved, by learning from her new attendant the better pronunciation of ſome German words. She made the experiment, and found it fully anſwered by the alacrity with which the girl ſeemed willing to enter into converſation. She obſerved that ſhe ſpoke, what appeared to her to be purer German than that ſpoken by Mrs. Ulric, and from hence ſhe concluded her to be a Saxon. This idea led her to imagine it highly probable that ſhe could read, and if it ſhould prove ſo, behold her at length furniſhed with a preceptreſs in the German tongue.

She made the trial on the inſtant, and was ſoon convinced that her conjecture was well founded; the girl read with fluency and pleaſure, ſeeming deſirous to recommend herſelf to Ellen to the beſt of her power. The book

ſhe

ſhe had put into her hands was a book of ſuch familiar phraſes as are calculated for the uſe of learners, and when Ellen was ſatisfied with the experiment ſhe had made, ſhe ſought a ſentence expreſſive of her thanks, and ſhe read it with as good pronunciation as ſhe was miſtreſs of. The girl ſeemed forcibly ſtruck, and turning over the leaves, ſtopt not until ſhe found an expreſſion, the ſenſe of which was, "I owe all to you." This ſhe pronounced with ſo peculiar an emphaſis, pointing at the french on the other ſide, to Ellen, and looking upon her with ſo much meaning, and with a countenance ſo ſuited to the ſenſe of the words ſhe uſed, that Ellen felt an inſtant conviction that ſhe was known.

When words are wanting, the moſt untutored will have recourſe to actions. The girl, as if impatient to explain herſelf, threw herſelf on her knees before Ellen, and paſſionately kiſſing her hand pronounced the name of the Saxon village in which Ellen had paſſed ſo many weeks. This word inſtantly recalled to her recollection the features of the perſon before her, and ſhe recogniſed the daughter of the cottager, to whom her bounty had furniſhed ſo ſeaſonable a relief when her habitation had been deſtroyed by fire.

Ellen's boſom had long been a ſtranger to the degree of delight that this diſcovery communicated; her quick perception anticipated in a moment all the advantages ſhe might derive from it, and her firſt ſentiment being that of gratitude to an ever watchful Providence, ſhe threw herſelf on her knees by the girl,

girl, and with uplifted hands and eyes thanked heaven for what she felt as an earnest of her deliverance.

From this moment scarcely an hour passed without Ellen making some advance in her powers of communicating her sentiments to her new friend, and as she had from the first warned her to conceal their intercourse from Mrs. Ulric, their hours of lecture were conducted with the greatest secrecy. Ellen thought it unnecessary to explain any circumstances of her situation farther to the girl, than to inform her that she was an English woman, and to assure her most solemnly that she was unjustly detained from her country and friends, and that all she desired was the means of releasing herself from her present confinement: She however fully exposed her poverty, and her utter inability to reward any risk the young woman might run in assisting her to escape. To all such precautionary information, the girl constantly replied in the grateful and affecting words that she had first used, "I owe all to you."

It was only by degrees that they came to understand each other with tolerable ease, but Ellen learnt, through all the imperfection attending the very first of their communication, that her grateful Saxon was ready to sacrifice every thing for her sake. When she she was able more fully to understand her, she learnt that she had only been taken by Mrs. Ulric on a disappointment she had of a servant, who she had more approved; that as her subsistence depended upon her labour, she did not

not doubt, as her character was good, of being able to find, without difficulty, as eligible an eſtabliſhment as her preſent one, ſhould ſhe loſe it in conſequence of her ſervices to Ellen.

Ellen, from her natural abhorrence to all diſguiſe, heſitated whether ſhe ſhould not, now ſhe could explain herſelf with tolerable facility, take Mrs. Ulric into her confidence, but, upon farther reflection, ſhe found, that her preſent hopes were too dear to be put to hazard by a communication, which from the proofs ſhe had ſeen of Mrs. Ulric's high ſenſe of the ſacredneſs of the truſt repoſed in her, might be the means of deſtroying them all together. She conſidered that in effecting eſcape, ſhe did juſtice to herſelf without injuring any body; and ſhe felt aſſured from the idea ſhe had formed of Mrs. Ulric's character, that were ſhe acquainted with the whole of the caſe, ſhe would rejoice in her deliverance.

Theſe conſiderations determined her to maintain her ſecret: She learnt from Thereſa the name of Mrs. Ulric, and that of the Nobleman in whoſe houſe ſhe was confined; and no longer wondered from what ſhe knew of his intimacy with Sir William, that he had been able with his aſſiſtance, ſo completely to ſucceed in his plan of ſhutting her up.

Some weeks were now elapſed ſince Mrs. Ulric had been confined to her bed, and tho' the force of the diſorder was abated, ſhe was become ſo lame that ſhe could not be moved from thence; however, as ſome amendment appear-

appeared every day, the time preſſed, for Ellen's beſt hopes of a ſucceſsful eſcape were placed on her being able to conceal it for ſome days from Mrs. Ulric.

Thereſa and ſhe now daily conſulted upon the beſt means of effecting this eſcape. The abſolute want of money was a great obſtacle, for Ellen was deſirous to purchaſe a peaſant's dreſs of the country, as ſhe hoped, by ſuch a diſguiſe, to paſs wholly undiſtinguiſhed from thoſe with whom ſhe was to mix. Money was not to be procured, but Ellen ſuggeſted the poſſibility of exchanging ſome of her own clothes for thoſe of the kind ſhe now preferred: This was accordingly accompliſhed, and Ellen found herſelf in poſſeſſion of all the neceſſary garments. Thereſa had informed her, that until ſhe could get beyond the limits of Bohemia, even the little German ſhe knew would ſcarcely be of any uſe to her; that the Bohemians hated the Germans, and could never be induced to apply themſelves to the ſtudy of their language, though there were ſchools eſtabliſhed for that purpoſe in ſeveral places; that therefore ſhe would find few people in the interior parts of the country who underſtood it, and though moſt of the farmers who were ſituated on the great roads had a very competent knowledge of German, there were few who would be induced to converſe in it: Thereſa therefore adviſed, that laying aſide all attempts at making herſelf underſtood, ſhe ſhould truſt wholly to the compaſſion her ſpeechleſs wants might

might excite, and the reward that her muſic ſhould be thought to deſerve.

The idea of the latter reſource had alſo been ſuggeſted by Thereſa, whoſe two years reſidence in a Bohemian ſervice had made her very well acquainted with the predilection that the lower rank of people in Bohemia bore to muſic; ſhe had obſerved Ellen's harp, and had told her that could ſhe carry that with her, a few tunes upon it would ſcarcely ever fail to procure her a draught of milk, or a night's lodging. The harp was too cumberous for Ellen to think for a moment of burthening herſelf with it: ſhe had therefore determined to ſubſtitute a mandoline, which ſhe had ſent for to Dreſden, and Thereſa fully approved the ſuccedaneum.

Ellen could not help ſhrinking from the idea of performing ſuch a journey as lay before her alone; ſhe would willingly have engaged Thereſa to have accompanied her; ſhe found her perfectly ready to retrace, in her company, the ſteps that had led her from her native villiage; but, beſides that, Ellen, from her ignorance whether Sir William had returned to England or had continued abroad, was very unwilling to approach Saxony, it being the place where, in the latter caſe, ſhe was moſt likely to meet with him, or with ſome body, who from their connexions with him might know her, ſhe could not conſent to bring Thereſa into a ſituation where ſhe would again be a burthen upon her friends, when

when ſhe had nothing in her power to make them any compenſation for ſuch a burthen.

There were ſimilar objections to making her the companion of her travels in any other direction, for let her part with her where ſhe would, ſhort of England, ſhe had nothing wherewith to reward her, or to aſſiſt her in finding her way home. Ellen's ſecret wiſh was, that Thereſa would accompany her to England, there ſhe doubted not of being able to make her ſuch a recompenſe as would fully repay her for all her trouble and fatigue; but to ſo diſtant a peregrination Ellen obſerved reluctance in Thereſa, that ſhe was too delicate to try to overcome; and indeed a ſtill farther reflection upon all circumſtances ſoon reconciled her ſelf-denial with prudence: She conſidered, that if Thereſa accompanied her, her eſcape would be immediately diſcovered, and as ſhe had no means of ſpeedy flight, and no place of refuge, ſuch a diſcovery would inevitably lead to a renewal of her captivity: She recollected what Sir William had ſaid in his firſt letter, of the precautions he had taken to render abortive all attempts to eſcape, and ſhe became convinced that her ſafety lay in leaving Thereſa behind her, ſince by her continuing her attendance in her apartment, ſome days after her departure, ſhe would not be obliged to announce her flight until ſhe was ſecurely beyond the reach of all purſuit.

The place from whence ſhe thought it moſt eaſy to eſcape, was the garden-door; ſince Mrs. Ulric had indulged her with extending

tending her walks beyond the garden, all faſtenings had been removed from it except the lock, ſhe ſhewed the door to Thereſa, who aſſured her ſhe could eaſily find a method of opening that.

Every thing was now arranged: It was agreed that Ellen ſhould appear indiſpoſed when ſhe made her laſt viſit to Mrs. Ulric before her departure, and that the ſuppoſed continuance of this indiſpoſition ſhould be the excuſe that Thereſa ſhould make to Mrs. Ulric for Ellen's unuſual abſence from the ſick chamber; to give this apology the greater air of truth, Ellen had no ſooner determined upon her flight, than ſhe forbore, under one pretence or other, her daily viſits to Mrs. Ulric, and ſhe even ſometimes ſuffered two days to paſs without ſeeing her. This was a ſevere infliction to Ellen's grateful and feeling heart, more eſpecially as ſhe could not but obſerve Mrs. Ulric ſeemed caſt down by this relaxation in her attentions; but the neceſſity of the caſe ſilenced her ſcruples, and ſhe conſoled herſelf with the thought that in future ſhe could ſo explain her conduct to her friend, as would fully exculpate her from any charge of unkindneſs.

Ellen took from Thereſa a direction to Mrs. Ulric, to whom ſhe determined to write from England an acknowledgment of all the obligations ſhe had received from her, and to ſend her ſome token of her eſteem and gratitude; ſhe alſo put down the name of her faithful Thereſa,

Thereſa, and that of the place where ſhe might tranſmit the reward of her ſervices that ſhe meant to ſend her.

She next ſtudied all the maps of Germany and Bohemia that ſhe had in her poſſeſſion, and having learnt from Thereſa the exact ſpot in which ſhe then was, ſhe ſketched out a kind of route for herſelf, as ſomething of a guide to ſteer her courſe by; here Thereſa could be of little uſe to her, as her knowledge of the country, except by hearſay, was confined to within a few miles of the place they were in.

Ellen having made all the preparations for her expedition, and taken all the precautions that circumſtances would admit of, appointed the next morning for her departure. Thereſa packed a ſmall baſket with cold meat and bread, at the bottom of which Ellen put ſeveral trifles that ſhe thought might poſſibly be of comfort or aſſiſtance to her; ſhe made up alſo as large a bundle of linen as ſhe could carry with any convenience, both as a ſource of comfort to herſelf, and as a means, if all others failed, of procuring food or lodging; ſhe farther provided a pair of ſhoes beſides thoſe ſhe wore, and being dreſſed in her peaſant's dreſs, her mandoline ſlung by her ſide, her bundle under one arm, and her baſket on the other, ſhe quietly deſcended the ſtairs which led from the gallery to the hall, and accompanied by Thereſa, made the beſt of her way to the garden; Thereſa eaſily burſt the lock of the door, and Ellen ſaw herſelf at liberty; ſhe turned to embrace her faithful

Thereſa, ſaying, "Oh, my friend, how ſhall I ever repay you? Take all I have to give, as an earneſt that when I have more I will give more."

This *all* was a thin plate of gold in which the picture of her father was ſet, and which ſhe had looſened from the picture for this purpoſe. It had occurred to her to make this uſe of it during the courſe of this preceding night, as ſhe lay ſleepleſs and diſturbed with the thoughts that ſhe ſhould be obliged to quit Thereſa without leaving with her any mark of her eſteem, or any earneſt of what ſhe intended to do for her in future.

Thereſa generouſly declined accepting the gold, urging, that it might be of uſe to her, but Ellen felt there was ſo little difference between actual want and the ſafeguard that ſuch a piece of gold would be to her, that no conſideration of this ſort could induce her to forego the pleaſure ſhe had in leaving ſome memorial of her gratitude in the hands of Thereſa; yet, ſhe afterwards experienced, that gold even of leſs value, was to her of the utmoſt importance; but though Ellen could conceive the preſſure of want, ſhe had not yet felt its weight, ſhe therefore forced all the property ſhe was worth upon Thereſa, and again embracing her,

"God protect and reward you, my dear Thereſa," ſaid ſhe, "and be aſſured nothing but death ſhall hinder me from ſhewing the ſenſe I have of my obligations to you."

"Oh! Madam," returned the grateful hearted Thereſa, "God protect and reward *you, I owe all to you!*"

And

And with theſe memorable words accompanied by a flood of tears, ſhe kiſſed the hand of Ellen, and after watching her move ſome yards from the garden-door, ſhe withdrew, and cloſed it upon her.

## CHAP. XX.

"Per mezzo i boſchi, e per ſtrano Sentiero,
"Dunpue Ella ſe nandò ſola, e romita."

ARIOSTO.

IT was about five o'clock on a glorious morning in the middle of July, that Ellen thus effected her eſcape from a captivity that had laſted more than three years, and of which the miſeries had been heightened by a ſtroke of misfortune, that would have ſhed a gloom over the brighteſt days of proſperity. Amid the variety of emotions that ſwelled Ellen's heart, at this affecting moment, fear was a very predominate feeling.

Habit ſo far triumphed over reaſon, as to excite a moſt lively alarm when ſhe thus found herſelf wholly dependant on her own powers—unaided and unprotected, ſhe ſhrunk from the project ſhe had undertaken—ſhe thought for a moment it was above the ſtrength either of body or mind aſſigned to her ſex, and that it was preſumption to have undertaken it. This was but the thought of a moment, the next ſhe ſmiled at the force of prejudice, and the artificial imbecility, and falſe idea of decorum, induced by cuſtom. She conſidered that in the eyes of all who met her, ſhe was only a peaſant, and could therefore draw on

on herſelf neither the gaze of curioſity, or provoke the obſervations of impertinence—for that a *peaſant* ſhould make uſe of her limbs in moving from place to place, unattended and alone, was according to rule, and the *eternal fitneſs of things*. To thoſe who knew not that her journey extended farther than from her native village to the neighbouring one, there was nothing daring or unfeminine, in being alone; and that in fact the whole of her journey was only to conſiſt of a certain number of ſuch removals from village to village.

Thus the objections of prejudice were preſently ſilenced by reaſon, but there were yet certain difficulties and contingent dangers that were but too real, and to ſupport herſelf under both all her natural force of mind, and undoubting reliance upon the ſuperintendance of Providence, were no more than abſolutely neceſſary.

She had before her a journey of more than nine hundred miles, without money, without a friend to whom ſhe could make herſelf known, without the means of warding off one evil that might attack her; ſhould her ſtrength fail, or ſhould illneſs ſeize her, ſhe had not the poſſibility of ſupporting herſelf until vigour returned, or until health was reſtored; ſhe was to depend upon charity for the morſel neceſſary to her daily ſuſtenance, and for her nightly lodging, and fromher ignorance of the route ſhe was to take, and the impoſſibility ſhe muſt find in calculating her powers of reaching ſuch places as would afford ſhelter, it was but too probable ſhe would frequently find

herſelf hungry when no food was near, and weary when ſhe knew not where to lay her head; if the public roads expoſed her more to danger, the private paths rendered her more helpleſs if danger approached, and to the moſt eligible choice in ſuch an alternative no wiſdom was adequate. Theſe, and many ſuch thoughts as theſe, alarmed but did not depreſs the mind of Ellen.

With all theſe difficulties and dangers before her, ſhe ſtill thought herſelf happy that ſhe was no longer a priſoner, and if ſhe had been able to preſerve her equanimity in a more calamitous ſtate, ſhould it deſert her in a leſs? She endeavoured, by reaſon, to diveſt her ſituation of all imaginary terrors, and artificial hardſhips, and to collect all the powers of her mind to ſupport thoſe that really accompanied it. She reſolved then ſteadily to proceed; making all poſſible uſe of her underſtanding, her patience, and her courage, but truſting alone for the happy iſſue of her endeavours to that Being, who is the defender of the weak, the ſupporter of the afflicted, and the enlightener of the ignorant.

It was Ellen's deſign to proceed to Egra, from whence, as nearly as ſhe could calculate, ſhe was ſomething more than eighty miles. From thence ſhe deſigned her route to be to Frankfort, to Cologne, and through the low countries to Helvoetſluys, here ſhe knew ſhe ſhould find a ready paſſage to Harwich, and as to her further proceedings ſhe left them to be determined by the circumſtances that might ariſe; at the diſtance which

ſhe

ſhe then was from England, it appeared to her that the moment ſhe ſet foot on its ſhores ſhe was at home, and however impoſſible ſhe might have thought it in former times to have found her way into Northumberland from Harwich alone, on foot and pennyleſs; ſhe conſidered that the perſon who had found the means under all theſe diſadvantages, with the additional one of imperfect language, to make her way from the heart of Germany acroſs the Engliſh channel, was not the one who ſhould diſtreſs her mind with the difficulties that might ariſe in comparatively ſo ſhort a pilgrimage.

The morning was gay and cheering, Ellen walked leiſurely on, and when the heat of the day induced her to ſeek for reſt, ſhe found a ſhady covert, through which ran a brook, where unpacking her baſket, ſhe indulged in the refreſhment that the friendly Thereſa had provided, and ſhe quenched her thirſt with the waters of the rivulet that ran at her foot.

Having continued in this ſecluded ſpot 'till the fervor of the day was paſt, and 'till her wearied limbs began to feel the invigorating effect of refreſhment, ſhe again began her journey, and with the ſame leiſurely pace, happily arrived, as the ſun was ſetting, at a ſmall village: Her knowledge of the ſituation of moſt of the Bohemian villages had induced her, on the ſight of a large wood, to quit the public road in ſearch of one, and her ſagacity was repaid by finding this, at the moment that ſhe moſt wiſhed for ſuch an aſylum.

Here ſhe was to make the firſt experiment as to the effect that her muſic would have upon the charitable feelings of the inhabitants; placing herſelf therefore on a little mound of ſods, that ſeemed to be raiſed for the purpoſe of a rural ſeat, ſhe took up her mandoline, and began a little wild and lively air; preſently ſhe found herſelf ſurrounded by half a dozen ragged boys and girls: She changed her notes, and ſet them all dancing. This appearance of gaiety ſoon drew others to partake of it, the dancers increaſed, and whenever they ſuſpended their exerciſe, Ellen ſung a few lines of a ſong, or diverſified their amuſement by a change in her muſic.

She had ſoon the whole village for auditors, and ſingling from amongſt the more elderly part of the company a female, whoſe countenance ſhe thought promiſed well, ſhe aſked, in Engliſh, the favour of a night's lodging. She had not choſen this language from the moſt diſtant hope of being underſtood, but merely to ſhew that ſhe was a ſtranger, and to draw on a converſation, in the courſe of which ſhe thought ſhe might be able to fall upon a method of making her wants known: Luckily, however, for her, amongſt her auditors, there was one of thoſe numerous individuals, who travel in large parties from Bohemia all over Europe, loaded with glaſſes and trinkets of various kinds, and which they ſell to ſo much advantage that they frequently return with a ſum ſufficient to ſupport them in affluence the reſt of their lives in their native country: This man had,

in

in the courſe of his travels, viſited England, and knew the ſounds that Ellen uttered were Engliſh, and with a little cloſer attention was able to make out with perfect clearneſs the nature of her requeſt; he explained it to the woman to whom Ellen had addreſſed herſelf, and it found a ready acquieſcence from the charitable heart of the poor Bohemian farmereſs, who was moved with Ellen's ſweet ſounds, and pleaſed with the ſoftneſs of her addreſs, and the civility of her manners: So true it is, that however vice may have introduced a variety of tongues, the language of virtue is univerſal.

Ellen, after thankfully feaſting upon a bowl of milk and bread, was conducted to a ſtraw mattraſs, covered with a rug, which had nothing diſguſting or offenſive in its appearance, and with which Ellen, after having thrown herſelf upon the mattraſs, covered herſelf. She flattered herſelf that the fatigues of the day would procure her ſome hours of ſound ſleep; but the novelty of her ſituation, and the fullneſs of her mind, rendered this hope vain: If ſhe cloſed her eyes for a moment, the next ſhe ſtarted, and awoke in ſome fancied danger; her ſlumbers were reſtleſs and feveriſh, and ſhe was happy to riſe with the earlieſt of the friendly houſhold, and after having received a breakfaſt ſimilar to her ſupper of the night before, and paid for it by another tune upon her mandoline, ſhe purſued her journey, taking the beſt directions as to her route to Egra that ſhe was able to procure.

Three days had Ellen thus wandered alone through the woods of Bohemia, and three nights had ſhe received ſhelter and ſuſtenance from its hoſpitable inhabitants. The timidity which reaſon could not wholly ſubdue, had yielded to time; ſhe no longer thought that the eye of every paſſenger was turned upon her, ſhe was convinced ſhe was to no one an object of curioſity or wonder; ſhe no longer expected a ruffian to ſtart from behind every tree, and when ſhe ſought a covert wherein to paſs the noon-tide hour, ſhe felt ſecure that ſhe ſhould meet with no interruption. Her mind, always alive to the ſimple delights of nature, began to take a pleaſure and intereſt in the ſcenes amidſt which ſhe wandered; ſhe often lingered under the cover of a thick wood, more from the delight ſhe felt in the ſhade, than any need ſhe had of reſt; and ſhe often prolonged her ſojourn by the ſide of a rippling brook, that ſhe might continue ſoothed by its murmurs, or from being unable to forego the pleaſure of the harmony that reſounded from every branch of the trees with which it was overſhadowed. Often would ſhe compare her preſent mode of travelling with that to which ſhe had been formerly accuſtomed, and her good taſte gave the preference to that which ſhe now purſued: Here no impediments from bad roads, no impoſitions from Inn-keepers, no wrangling with poſtillions, no compaſſion for the overloaded and worn out horſes, aroſe to diſturb the even tenor of her thoughts, or to ſpoil her reliſh of the beauties that ſurrounded her.

But

But as the taſte of Ellen was genuine, and formed from that love of nature which is the reſult of good ſenſe and a feeling heart, it was pure from thoſe allays of romance, which, while they give a greater currency to what is called taſte, do in fact debaſe its eſſential qualities. While, therefore, as a matter of feeling, ſhe preferred wandering on foot amidſt woods and villages, with no certain path to direct her to the ſhelter ſhe was ſeeking, ſhe fully acknowledged the more certain comfort of a well built travelling chaiſe, drawn even by miſerable poſt horſes, along a road which preſented no objects but the regularly placed mile ſtones, and thoſe poſts of intelligence which ſo benevolently preſerve the traveller from going aſtray.

The weather ſince Ellen had began her peregrination had been uncommonly fine, the ſky above was ſerene, the ground beneath dry and firm, but ſhe was well aware what an alteration a change of ſeaſon would make, not only in her comforts, but in the pleaſures of her imagination; and ſhe felt ſometimes, with no little pain, that though wandering in ſcenes ſuch as ſhe was at preſent in, when it was voluntary, and the ſhelter at hand, might be delightful, yet to the weary traveller who had no option, and no refuge to flee unto whatever miſchief might betide, it was attended with danger and inconveniencies, from the feelings and fears of which all its pleaſures would be moſt readily relinquiſhed: If therefore ſhe were willing and ready to make uſe of the amuſements which offered themſelves

ſelves on the way, as the means to cheer the melancholy path ſhe was was treading, ſhe was not leſs deſirous to arrive at that haven of reſt, when ſuch alleviations would be no longer wanted.

It was not however only from the woods, the birds, and the brooks, that Ellen in this forlorn ſituation derived amuſement to her fancy, or food for reflection: While ſhe marked the extreme poverty of that rank of people with whom ſhe now aſſociated, yet ſaw them tread a ſoil rich with with every bleſſing that nature could beſtow, and which aſked but the hand of labour-working for itſelf to crown them with abundance, how did her heart recoil from the conſequences of that feudal tyranny which makes the many ſubſervient to the few.

Yet was her pity often checked, and ſhe was led to think it miſplaced when ſhe beheld the cheerful good humour of the people, the happy air of their countenances, and the little ſenſe they ſeemed to have of their wants: In the hopeleſſneſs of their ſtate they ſeemed to find its conſolation; they were at the worſt, and proved how much leſs painful it is to ſuffer than to fear. If the bleſſings of free men were beyond their reach, they were equally ſecure from thoſe ills, the probability of which alarm thoſe who have any thing to loſe—The unfruitfulneſs of the ſeaſons, the devaſtations of fire or of war, all were to fall upon their Lord; they were but another part of his property, and evils that did not affect their perſons, were indifferent to them.

"Happi-

"Happineſs then," ſaid Ellen, "is the plant of every ſoil, ſince it will flouriſh even in the deſerts of ſlavery: Who then ſhall deny that the God of *all* is merciful to *all*"

But Ellen's preſent ſituation called forth reflections more intereſting to her than any benevolence, however warm or extended, or however lively may be the intereſt we take in the pains or conſolations of others can produce—She had now ſubſiſted three days on charity, and the alternative for many days to come was ſtarving—a circumſtance to her ſo new, and in general conſidered as ſo degrading, could not but fill the reflecting mind of Ellen with a variety of affecting thoughts. The very people whom the tenderneſs of her heart led her to pity, conſidered her as one degree below themſelves in the ſcale of human happineſs, and from the very poverty which ſhe regarded with ſo much compaſſion, ſhe received a boon, without which ſhe muſt have periſhed. But, though thrown from her rank in ſociety, Ellen conſidered herſelf not the leſs as maintaining her ſtation in animated nature; ſhe was ſtill one of thoſe beings who are placed only lower than the angels, and who, in the eye of Providence are all equal: Whatever diſtreſs therefore ſhe felt from the ungratified wants of cold and hunger, it was unembittered by any ſentiment of wounded pride; ſhe conſidered it not as any debaſement to be reduced to a ſtate in which a God, who is conſiderate alike of all his creatures, has ſeen good to place ſo large a part

part of them; and it was with equal gratitude to that God, and equal elevation of mind, though certainly not with an equal degree of happineſs, that ſhe now ſtretched forth her hand to receive, as ſhe had before extended it to give: Are we not all alike children of God's mercy, thought ſhe, and ſhall we conceive there is greater dignity annexed to receiving it through one medium than another? On ſome he beſtows his alms by the means of parental inheritance, he gives it to others as the price of their perſonal labours, but they are not the leſs abſolute dependants on his daily bounty than thoſe whom he appoints the ravens to feed ——He has ordained my preſent ſuſtenance to flow from the charity of my fellow creatures, let me ſerve him, in receiving, as they ſerve him in giving. The greater bleſſing has been mine, it may be mine again, but in the mean while let me not grudge it to thoſe, to whom in the preſent moment, God has granted it.

How much ſo juſt and yet ſo uncommon a manner of thinking, contributed to the internal peace of Ellen, in her preſent diſtreſsful circumſtances, may be known by thoſe who have experienced all the pangs a contrary way of reaſoning can inflict; who in the loſs of every thing that conſtitutes human happineſs have breathed their *bittereſt* ſighs, from the ſenſe of the *ſhame*, which they falſely imagined to be annexed to a fall from affluence to poverty: But, if there be no ſhame in being *born* poor, how can there be any, where the change is independant of guilt in *becoming* ſo?

If

If there be no ſhame in poverty, innocently incurred, can there be any in receiving the relief that poverty requires?—Can what is the virtue of our fellow creatures be our degradation? Be it remembered, misfortunes may *afflict*, vice only can *degrade*. The one is often the beſt of God's gifts, the other is the work of ourſelves alone.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XXI.

"Virtue is bold, and goodneſs never fearful."

SHAKESPEARE.

TOWARDS the cloſe of the fourth day of Ellen's wanderings, ſhe began, as uſual, to look around her for thoſe appearances in the country which generally indicated where a village was to be found; ſhe looked but without diſcovering any thing that gave her reaſon to ſuppoſe ſhe ſhould find what ſhe ſought.

She was juſt emerged from a thick wood, and had entered upon a kind of heath, which from its extent and drearineſs, preſented her with an uncomfortable and alarming proſpect; no mark of human habitation, no mark of ſhelter of any ſort, was to be ſeen——ſhe muſt either croſs the heath before her, in purſuit of the refuge ſhe wanted, and to do this would take up a conſiderable time; or ſhe muſt return into the wood which ſhe had juſt left, and there take up her abode for the night: Her fears forbade the one, and her wearineſs ſhe thought, almoſt made the other impoſſible. Terror, however, was, for the moment more prevalent than fatigue, and ſhe reſolved to attempt to croſs the heath; ſhe had ſtill ſome daylight, and ſhe conſidered, that

that ſhould ſhe arrive too late in a village to find admittance into any houſe, yet that the ſhelter that ſome out building, or ſhed, might afford her, was preferable on many accounts to any ſhe could hope for in the wood.

Ellen ſet forward accordingly, but the wild ſeemed to lengthen as ſhe went, and ſhe became ſo fatigued that ſhe could hardly proceed; to ſtop, however, was what ſhe could not reſolve upon; the evening was dark and lowering, and, for the ſeaſon of the year, cold, and while ſhe could move her limbs ſhe could not conſent to lie down upon the bare and hard ground, without a twig to ſhelter her, and expoſed to all the rain and ſtorm that ſeemed gathering: With ſlow ſteps ſhe went on, and at length reached the other ſide of the heath; ſhe found it bounded alſo by a wood, but not ſo uninterruptedly thick as that which ſhe had paſſed through before her entrance on the heath: The evening was already too dark to enable her to diſtinguiſh with certainty, but there appeared as if there had been once roads cut through the wood, though they ſeemed now nearly grown up, and the ſpot where ſhe then was ſhe thought was the entrance of an avenue; fatigued as ſhe was, this thought gave her power to proceed, ſhe flattered herſelf that it might lead at leaſt to ſome ruined building, where, at the worſt, a jutting cornice, or projecting wall, "juſt nodding to its fall," might afford her ſome ſhelter from the rain, which now began at intervals to fall very heavily, accompanied with loud and ſudden guſts of wind; nor

nor was the conjecture ill founded. After about half an hour's walking, in which time all her outward garments were compleatly wet through, ſhe found herſelf amongſt the intricacies of ſome building, which ſhe took for the cloiſters of a decayed monaſtery; ſhe troubled herſelf, however, but little in aſcertaining whether ſhe were right or wrong; there was too little light to have enabled her to have diſcovered the truth, if it had been important to her to have known it, but the moſt momentous concern was to find out ſome place where ſhe could reſt her weary limbs unexpoſed to the weather: As the roof of that part of the building which ſhe was then in was not deſtroyed, ſhe withdrew to the upper end of it, and there, taking off ſuch of her clothes, as were moſt wet, ſhe ſeated herſelf upon a kind of ſtone bench, and began to rummage her baſket for ſomething to eat. Luckily it was tolerably ſupplied; ſhe had that morning been ſo much moved by the want of linen in the dreſs of the good farmereſs who had lodged her the night before, that ſhe had not been able to forbear, when ſhe parted with her, preſenting her with a chemiſe of her own, though this was contrary to the prudential rule ſhe had laid down, not to part in a country where ſhe could ſo eaſily diſcharge her bill with a ſong, with what, in another, whoſe greater riches had baniſhed equal hoſpitality, ſhe might find neceſſary to her ſupport.

The woman was ſo much ſtruck with this unexpected piece of generoſity in Ellen, that ſhe loaded her with a thick ſlice of bread, and a ſmall

a ſmall bottle of milk: Ellen having found equal munificence where ſhe had ſought a dinner, had preſerved her morning ſtore untouched, and ſhe now found it a moſt ſeaſonable relief. Hungry and fatigued, however, as ſhe was, ſhe prudently conſumed only half of her riches, preſerving the remainder for the exigencies of the next day; in part, however, ſhe ſupplied the deficiencies of her ſcanty meal by ſwallowing a few drops upon a lump of ſugar, ſhe having had the precaution to furniſh herſelf with ſuch a cordial upon leaving the place of her captivity.

Having taken all the refreſhment which ſhe thought it prudent to allow herſelf, ſhe lay down to ſleep, and though the floor on which ſhe ſtretched herſelf was hard and damp, and her pillow only her bundle of linen, ſuch was the fatigue of her body, and ſuch the calmneſs of her mind, that in a few moments ſhe fell aſleep. She knew not how long ſhe had continued in this ſituation, when ſhe was ſuddenly awakened, as it by ſome noiſe; ſhe ſtarted up and looked around her, when, to her unſpeakable terror, ſhe beheld by the glimmering of a light, not a hundred yards diſtant, two men carrying a lady, who, by her helpleſſneſs appeared to be dead.

Ellen's heart did not at this moment beat with its uſual regularity, yet her preſence of mind did not deſert her, and conſidering that though the light enabled her to diſcover the objects that were cloſe to it, it was not ſufficient to diſcover her to them in the diſtant and dark corner where ſhe lay; ſhe ſlunk as quietly

quietly as ſhe could behind a pillar that formed the place where ſhe was, into ſomething of a receſs, and waited the event in ſilence. The men bearing their burthen between them, advanced nearer, and Ellen was ſomething comforted by underſtanding from the expreſſions of one of them, who ſpoke in French, the deepeſt marks of grief for the ſituation of the lady. He could not ſurely, (ſhe thought) be the murderer of one, whom he ſo much deplored; yet, on laying her down, ſcarcely ten yards from the place where Ellen ſtood, and the light ſhining full upon her, Ellen obſerved that her cloaths were ſtained with blood, and ſhe fancied ſhe ſaw the blood ſtill iſſuing from her boſom, which from the diſorder of her dreſs was very viſible.

"What will become of me?" (exclaimed the man, who was the only one who had yet ſpoken) "wretched Antoinette! deareſt creature! How have you reaſon to curſe the hour in which you ſaw me!"

Theſe words determined Ellen; ſhe was aſſured there was no danger, but there was diſtreſs, and ſhe might be of uſe; coming out therefore haſtily from her hiding-place, ſhe cauſed little leſs conſternation by her appearance, than ſhe had felt upon being firſt ſtartled from her ſleep: "Suſpend your wonder," ſaid ſhe in French, to the perſon who ſeemed moſt intereſted, and whom ſhe now diſcovered to be a gentleman, and that the other man appeared a ſervant, "ſuſpend your wonder, and do not fear that I have any connexions

that

that may injure you, I am alone here, but perhaps I have the means to aſſiſt that lady, and I am ſure I have the inclination." A ready confidence took place of the ſuſpicions that had for a moment alarmed the breaſt of the ſtranger.

"Alas!" cried he, "I can only thank you, but I fear this miſerable victim of miſguided revenge is paſt all aſſiſtance."

Ellen ſcarcely waited to hear theſe words, ſhe now ſaw that the lady was really wounded, and ſhe ſeemed to have fainted from loſs of blood; but though the trace of the blood ſtill ſhewed whence it had flowed, it was now ſtaunched. The light enabled Ellen to diſcern that the place they were in was, as ſhe had ſuſpected, the ruins of a cloiſter, and it formed one ſide of a quadrangle, the buildings of the other three ſides of which were nearly deſtroyed; in the midſt of this ſquare had formerly been a fountain, and, though ruined, it ſtill contained water: Ellen ran thither, and filling a ſmall cup which ſhe carried about her, with water, ſhe waſhed the lady's wound, and had the ſatisfaction to find it was ſmall, and did not appear to be deep; ſhe then cut a large piece of a kind of ſticking plaiſter, which made a part of her ſtores, and covered the wound with it, and then mixing a little of the water with ſome of her cordial drops, ſhe contrived with the aſſiſtance of the ſtranger, who aided her benevolent efforts with the greateſt aſſiduity, to pour a ſmall quantity down her throat, ſhe then proceeded to chafe her temples, and rub her hands, and in a ſhort

a ſhort time ſhe was encouraged to continue her endeavours with ſtill greater energy by the lady giving evident ſigns of her returning life; in a few moments ſhe opened her eyes, Ellen gave her more cordial, and in a very ſhort time ſhe recovered her ſenſes.

While this was paſſing, the ſervant, at Ellen's ſuggeſtion, (for the ſtranger though he imitated and aſſiſted her in all ſhe did, ſeemed to have loſt the power of ſuggeſting any thing) had been fully employed in collecting a few dry ſticks, which was a taſk of ſome difficulty, for the rain of the preceding night had left nothing in a fit condition to burn that had been expoſed to it; luckily, however, in his reſearches he diſcovered ſeveral bundles of dry bruſh wood, and branches of trees, that had been heaped together in one corner of the cloiſter, probably by ſome peaſant, who deſigned to carry them away at ſome future opportunity: Of theſe he ſoon ſet fire to a ſufficient quantity to afford the comfort both of light and heat, the lady was removed nearer to it, and farther from the influence of the air, which blew cold on the open ſide of the building. The lady's cloaths were wet, and Ellen had no change to offer her, however ſhe took off her upper garments, as ſhe had done her own, and ſpread them all before the fire, while ſhe furniſhed her with ſome linen from her bundle, that ſupplied, though but ill, their place.

While Ellen performed the taſk of dreſſing and undreſſing the lady, the two men had retired,

tired, but not before the one, who ſeemed the maſter of the other, had aſſured the lady, in German, that ſhe might truſt wholly to Ellen, for that, if ever there were an angel from heaven ſhe was one. The lady herſelf appeared ſo weak, and ſo confounded, either with what ſhe had paſſed through, or with what ſhe now ſaw around her, that ſhe could utter nothing more than a few broken expreſſions of gratitude, in German, and ſometimes ſome paſſionate exclamations, in a language that Ellen did not at all underſtand. Ellen had now an opportunity of obſerving that this unknown lady was poſſeſſed of a very uncommon ſhare of beauty, that her form was inexpreſſibly fine, and that, notwithſtanding her paleneſs and langour, her complexion and countenance had charms that Ellen thought ſhe had not ſeen equalled; her dreſs, which was a kind of travelling chemiſe, ſpoke her of affluent fortune, all the materials of which it was compoſed being of the fineſt texture, and the air of conſcious ſuperiority with which ſhe received the ſervices of Ellen, if it did not give her kind benefactor a favorable opinion of her heart, at leaſt aſſured her, that ſhe was aſſiſting one, who, from the habit of command, entertained the idea that all who approached her were bound to obey.

When Ellen had contributed all in her power to reſtoring her to ſome degree of comfort, ſhe produced the remains of her ſupper, ſpared ſo prudently from her own preſent wants, in reference to thoſe of the next morning: The lady readily eat the bread and

and ſwallowed the milk, and appeared ſo much revived by the refreſhment they afforded, and ſo fully reſtored to health and vigour, that Ellen ſoon found ſhe had been miſtaken in having attributed the ſtate of inſenſibility, in which ſhe had at firſt ſeen her, to loſs of blood; from what now appeared, it ſeemed more probable that it had only proceeded from fatigue.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XXII.

——" Amazement reigns,
" Man's great demand: To trifle is to live:
" And is it then a trifle too, to die?"

YOUNG.

IT was upon the return of the gentleman to the fire that Ellen had firſt leiſure to obſerve him with any cloſeneſs of attention, ſhe had no ſooner done ſo, than ſhe was convinced that ſhe had ſeen him before, and being perſuaded by his manner of ſpeaking both French and German, that he was not a native either of France or Germany, an opinion that was confirmed both by his countenance and complexion, ſhe could not doubt but that he was Engliſh; ſhe made this diſcovery with a mingled ſenſation of hope and fear: Again ſhe looked at him, again ſhe liſtened to the tone of his voice; ſhe was more and more convinced that he was not unknown to her, but it ſeemed beyond the power of her recollection to recall his name, or where ſhe had ſeen him. Suddenly, on his throwing himſelf into a particular poſition, it ruſhed upon her mind that he was the huſband of her elder ſiſter, that profligate man of faſhion and

broken fortune, to whom the abſurd vanity of her mother had ſacrificed the happineſs and reſpectability of character of her favorite child. This diſcovery, though the ſtrangeneſs of it threw her into ſome confuſion, relieved her from every fear that ſhe ſhould be known by him: Ellen had never ſeen him ſince ſhe was fourteen, when he had viſited Groby Manor, for the only time during his connexion with any one belonging to it; ſhe was very ſure that the change that had taken place in her perſon in a period little ſhort of twelve years, muſt ſecurely ſhelter her from any diſcovery from him; for while time had made no other changes in his appearance than what aroſe from a few wrinkles, or a few grey hairs in the place of the darker locks, and ſmoother ſkin, which he had poſſeſſed in earlier youth; it had with her converted a roſy, ſun-burnt, romping, laughing girl, into an elegantly formed woman, whoſe pure red and white moſt truly blended, ſhewed in her cheek as if the roſe and lily ſtrove for maſtery; all gaiety was certainly at this time baniſhed from her countenance, and her large peaſant's ſtraw hat, which ſhe had now again tied cloſely under her chin, ſo effectually concealed her features, that if they had been much better known to Mr. Raymond than they really were, ſhe muſt have been ſafe from awakening any recollection in him.

As hopeleſs as ſhe knew his return to England was conſidered by all his connexions there, and the little probable good that would reſult if he were to return, yet ſhe could not avoid

avoid being ſhocked at the proof ſhe had before her of the licentious life he continued to lead, nor could he help pitying the lady, little conciliating as her manners were, for having formed a connexion, the extent of the iniquity of which ſhe thought it probable ſhe did not know. While theſe thoughts kept Ellen ſilent, the lady and gentleman, having diſmiſſed the ſervant upon ſome meſſage, continued to talk eagerly, and confident in the fancied ignorance of Ellen in the German language, or careleſs of her opinion, unreſervedly of their affairs and ſituation. From this converſation ſhe ſoon underſtood that the lady was by no means deſerving of her pity on the ſcore ſhe had granted it, for that ſhe was herſelf a fugitive wife, and that having been overtaken in the purſuit made after her by her huſband, an affray had enſued, and ſhe had received a wound in attempting to interpoſe between her huſband and her lover, the latter of whom becoming deſperate on ſeeing her blood flow, had fired at the huſband, and, as he ſuppoſed had killed him; this act of violence, with the farther acts of outrage he and his attendants were on the point of committing, had ſo intimidated the companions of the huſband, that they had contented themſelves with carrying off his body, without making any farther attempt to impede the flight of the lovers: The lady having fainted from pain and terror, and it being no longer ſafe to continue in any high road, the lover had been obliged to convey her before him on horſeback, having diſmiſſed all his attend-

ants excepting one. It appeared from what Ellen heard, that in the courſe of a journey of more than twelve miles acroſs a country, of which they were ignorant, it had been impoſſible to afford her reſt or refreſhment, that ſhe had returned to her ſenſes only to relapſe again into inſenſibility, ſo that the lover had more than once believed her dead; this was an additional circumſtance that had forbidden him to ſtop at any houſe, and he had continued to travel on in hopes of finding ſome obſcure and deſerted building, ſuch not being very unfrequent in a country once much more populous than at preſent, where he might in ſafety conſider upon the courſe he had to purſue. Having paſſed through the outſkirts of a tolerably large village, toward the cloſe of the evening, he had ſent his ſervant to procure the means of ſtriking a light, in whatever place they might find it eligible, or might be obliged to ſtop. It was in purſuit of ſome refreſhment that Ellen found the ſervant was now diſpatched, and the lovers ſeemed to agree, that if they ſaw no reaſon againſt it in the morning, the place they were at preſent in would ſuit as well as any other, as a place of refuge for a few days; they had no doubt but that the purſuit would be renewed with redoubled ardour, and they agreed that their beſt hope of ſafety was to remain where they were till their purſuers had overſhot their mark.

Hitherto they were ſo much engroſſed by their own concerns that they ſeemed to have forgotten there was ſuch a perſon in the world

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as Ellen, but Mr. Raymond now addreſſed himſelf to her, hoping, although he did not, from the circumſtance of her ſpeaking French, take her to be a native of the country, that he might be able to obtain through her means ſome local information, he therefore inquired whether her home was near. Ellen replied, that at preſent ſhe had no home, but was endeavouring to make her way towards a very diſtant one. "In France?" "No." "In Germany?" "No." "In England?" "Yes." "What the devil!" exclaimed in Engliſh the profligate Mr. Raymond, "can then have brought you into the midſt of a Bohemian wild, alone and deſtitute?" "Misfortune!" ſaid Ellen, ſteadily fixing her eye upon him, "Misfortune, but not vice!"

The conſcious criminal ſeemed to ſhrink into himſelf, but rallying, "And how, my pretty one, do you mean to find your way from hence to England in your preſent helpleſs circumſtances?" "By making the beſt uſe I can of my underſtanding and my ſtrength." "A brave girl faith; if I were not juſt now a little encumbered, I would enliſt you under my banner, I am charmed with your ſpirit." "Your pardon, Sir," ſaid Ellen, with calm diſdain, "I am not ſo ſoon enliſted." "Oh! you would go with me; my road through life has been the path of pleaſure; I have lived but to amuſe myſelf: But, put aſide that overſhadowing hat, and let me ſee whether the face is worthy of the form, and the ſpirit that enlivens it." Ellen without ever ſeeming to hear theſe words, turned to the lady,

and aſked in her imperfect German, whether there were any thing ſhe could do towards her farther accommodation. The lady ſomething ſullenly replied, No. And the gentleman ſaid, ſtill ſpeaking in Engliſh, "You underſtand German then?" "Scarcely," returned Ellen. "Enough, perhaps, to know what we have been talking of, and if ſo you may as well know the whole buſineſs, I believe you will not turn informer."

Ellen was ſilent, for ſhe felt little curioſity to know more of an affair that ſeemed a complicated tiſſue of profligacy and deſperation; Mr. Raymond, however, who thought the circumſtances he had to bring forward offered a very reaſonable apology for an action that he could not conceal from himſelf, would be condemned by the general voice of mankind, did not deſiſt from his explanation. "That angel that you ſee there," ſaid he, looking at the lady, "is the daughter of a beaſt of an Hungarian nobleman, who to fulfil ſome ambitious ſchemes of his own, forced her into the arms of an old diſagreeable raſcal in high favour with the Emperor. What muſt a woman of feeling and ſpirit do in ſuch a caſe? Surely not ſubmit to all the horrors of the worſt kind of ſlavery, becauſe her tyrant was yclept a huſband. I was the happy man who the lady fixed upon to aſſiſt in breaking her chains, and with a liberality of mind for which I ſhall ever adore her, ſhe committed herſelf to my honor, loaded with all the jewels and ready caſh that ſhe could collect, and though, at preſent, we are

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put ſomething out of our way, we hope ſtill to find ſome ſacred ſpot of earth, where the pleaſures of love and the fruits of generoſity may be reaped, undiſturbed by the imagined rights of huſbands and the abuſed authority of parents.

Ellen could not but wonder at the ingenuity that had been able to tell a ſtory of diſobedience, treachery, adultery, and theft, in terms, that on the firſt hearing ſo little conveyed the nature of the actions they acknowledged. Mr. Raymond was ſo little conſcious that they conveyed it at all, that without any of that embarraſſment which a perſon leſs hackneyed in the *path of pleaſure* (as he had called the road of vice) muſt have felt in conſequence of ſuch a confeſſion, that he went on to ſay, that having taken what they hoped would have proved effectual methods to miſlead the huſband into a belief that they had, on leaving Vienna, turned their fugitive courſe towards Italy, they had indiſcreetly neglected to make the beſt of their way towards Dreſden, from the direct road to which place they had deviated as a means of farther ſecurity, and that they had the day before been overtaken, at a moment when they conceived themſelves in perfect ſafety. He then proceeded to detail the whole particulars of the affray that had enſued, and to relate, that when he found himſelf in danger of being purſued, not only as a raviſher, but as a murderer, he had ſent forward their carriage and their baggage, under the care of a ſervant, in whom he could confide, to Dreſ-

den, there to wait his farther orders, and in the mean time to ſpread a ſtory that the lady was dead, and his maſter gone he knew not whither; that in the haſte in which they were obliged to make their arrangements, they had not been able to ſecure any part of their property, except the lady's jewels, which were in her pocket, and what little money they had about them. "And now," ſaid this gallant hero of a ſtory compoſed of crimes, which more than any other in the whole roll of guilt are, from their own nature, and the injurious effects they have upon the intereſts of ſociety, the juſt objects of the greateſt abhorrence; "and now if fortune will but ſmile for a few days, we may ſtill baffle the malice of our enemies. My intention is, to order the ſervant I have ſent to Dreſden to join us as ſoon as poſſible, at Straſburg, from whence we will ſhape our courſe to ſome more dear retreat in the mountains of Switzerland, and there,

"The world forgetting, by the world forgot,"

we will remain alive only to love and happineſs." Love and happineſs! thought Ellen, how widely have I been miſtaken both in the means and the end of all that makes life deſirable, if theſe miſerables are right.

It was eaſy to be perceived that this long diſcourſe of her lover, in a language of which ſhe did not underſtand a word, was by no means pleaſing to the lady; ſhe broke in upon it by ſomething which ſhe ſaid very peeviſhly to him, and which Ellen did not perfectly underſtand. Ellen now began to wiſh impatiently

tiently for the morning, that ſhe might eſcape from the conſequences of a proof ſo pregnant; how infinitely preferable the moſt helpleſs ſolitude may be, to much of the ſociety that is to be met with in the world; yet how often had ſhe heard Mr. Raymond exalted as the moſt pleaſant of his ſex! how often had ſhe heard Mrs. Mordaunt declare that he had not a fault but in the eyes of thoſe rigid mortals who hold pleaſure as a vice, who refuſe to enjoy the bleſſings that are given them, and who ſeek heaven by abaſing the nobleſt of its works. Alas! thought Ellen, how fatally would he have been awakened from the falſe peace into which his flatterers have lulled him, had not the raſh paſſion of his unworthy companion interpoſed between his life and the juſt indignation of an injured huſband!

Light, at the ſeaſon of the year when theſe events happened, is ſuſpended for ſo ſhort a time, that had it not been for the ſtorms of the preceding evening, which ſtill filled the ſky with thick and heavy clouds, Ellen would have been very ſoon able to have purſued her wiſhes of quitting her new acquaintance; but the firſt hours of the morning were dark, and it continued to rain in ſome degree; before theſe obſtacles to her departure were removed, the ſervant returned with a quantity of milk and bread, which he had purchaſed at a village a few miles diſtant. Ellen was invited to partake of this refreſhment, which, in fact, ſhe wanted as much as any of the party, and in the courſe of the meal Mr. Raymond, who really did poſſeſs a part of that kindneſs of

human nature which had gained him the appellation of "the beſt humoured fellow breathing," expreſſed much genuine ſolicitude for the deſtitute ſituation Ellen appeared to be in: He felt this the more, as though he could draw nothing from her to confirm ſuch a ſuſpicion, he was ſtrongly perſuaded in his own mind that ſhe had been accuſtomed to a rank of life, which could not have prepared her to ſtruggle with her preſent difficulties; altho' ſhe had been very ſparing of her ſpeech, her accent, her manner of expreſſion, and tone of voice, all aſſured him of this, and ſtill more the eaſe and ſoftneſs of her manners. He ſettled in his own mind her probable ſtory to be, that having left her own country as an occaſional companion to a perſon of his own principles, but who poſſeſſed leſs of that compaſſionate good humour for which he had been often complimented, and upon which he piqued himſelf, ſhe had by the change of inclination, and want of generoſity in her companion, been reduced to her preſent difficulties. There was ſomething indeed in the nice ſenſe of propriety which ſhe appeared to have, and which was evident even to one who had loſt all ſuch feelings from his own mind, that militated againſt this idea; but as it was ſomething beyond meaſure ſtrange, that a perſon of real faſhion and character could be left by any, the moſt diſtreſſing occurrences, in the ſituation Ellen was now in, he thought it was taking the leſs improbable ſide to ſuppoſe, that her former way of life had not entirely obliterated all traces of thoſe feelings

ings which once adorned her ſtate of innocence. This ſuppoſed ſituation of Ellen did not in the leaſt make her a leſs intereſting, or even leſs eſtimable object in the eyes of Mr. Raymond; and he even felt ſomething of an additional deſire to aſſiſt her, from the proof ſuch aſſiſtance would be to all his acquaintance, that there is ſometimes a ſentiment of kindneſs in the breaſts of thoſe called wicked, towards the diſtreſſed, that the more rigidly virtuous are without. In conſequence of theſe reflections Mr. Raymond began to preſs Ellen to attach herſelf to their party, and hinted, in pretty intelligible terms, that beſides all the difficulties and diſtreſſes that would probably attend her finding her way back to England, ſhe would find it almoſt impoſſible, conſidering the circumſtances in which ſhe would arrive there, to form any eligible eſtabliſhment; whereas he had no doubt, if ſhe ſtayed with them, that he ſhould ſoon be able to introduce her to a friend who would make her forget all ſhe had loſt. Although all this would have been perfectly plain to the apprehenſion of Ellen, had ſhe been the ſort of perſon Mr. Raymond took her to be, yet being entirely ignorant of all that could lead her to his true meaning, and much of what he ſaid applying to her real ſituation, ſhe at firſt underſtood his offers only in a general ſenſe, and when by the turn and ſtrength of the expreſſions ſhe began to comprehend that there muſt be ſome particular meaning intended to be conveyed, ſhe was abſolutely at a loſs to gueſs what hat meaning could be: the cha-

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racter of the man who addreſſed her, and the manner of his expreſſions, however, perſuaded her, there was ſomething diſgraceful in the protection he offered her, and as ſhe was too wiſe to think of ſhewing any reſentment, ſhe contented herſelf with coldly and ſteadily ſaying, ſhe was indiſpenſably obliged to endeavour to return to England, as ſoon as poſſible, and that when there ſhe was aſſured ſhe ſhould want neither protection or friends. The unmoved manner of Ellen, and the little countenance that the lady gave to this plan of Mr. Raymond's, at length obliged him to ceaſe from farther urging it; and ſoon after, the ſun breaking forth in all its ſplendor, Ellen repacking the bundle, and re-adjuſting her baſket, roſe to depart. "We cannot ſuffer you to go," ſaid Mr. Raymond, "without making a ſmall acknowledgment for the obligations we are under to you; if you would have gone with us I would have done much for you, but now, ſo low are our finances reduced, that except our jewels, I equally divide the whole of our ſtock when I offer you this trifle." In ſaying theſe words, he preſented Ellen with a ducat. Ellen's firſt impulſe was to refuſe it, ſo far did habit make her forgetful of the appearance ſhe then wore; but Mr. Raymond added, "No, no,—no refuſals; while you ramble amongſt theſe wilds indeed, the charity of theſe half ſavages may make money needleſs, but when you are among the whole ſavages of a civilized world, you will have nothing but what you can pay for."

Ellen

Ellen then took the ducat, but Mr. Raymond, who felt his ſolicitude increaſe for her every moment, in ſpite of, or perhaps ſtimulated by her reſerve and coldneſs, ſaid, "Devil take me, if I'm not aſhamed to part ſo; ſtay, would it not be poſſible to convey you a bill to Cologne? Do you mean to take Cologne in your way?" Ellen replied ſhe did. "The moment we think it ſafe to quit this retreat," ſaid he, "we ſhall bend our ſteps towards Straſbourg, we ſhall be there in much leſs time than your poor little feet can carry you to Cologne, come, give me your directions, and at Le Savage you ſhall be ſure of finding, on your arrival in that place, a bill for a ſum ſufficient to procure you an eaſy conveyance to England, and to any part of it to which you may chooſe to go." Ellen heſitated; the performance of ſuch an offer would annihilate half thoſe difficulties and dangers ſhe dreaded ſo much to encounter. "Such a ſupply," returned Ellen, "would indeed be extremely acceptable to me; but as, on my return to England, I ſhall be perfectly able to return any pecuniary obligations I may receive; I cannot accept your offer, however grateful I may be for it, except you will put me into ſome method of repaying the money when I no longer ſtand in need of it." Mr. Raymond regarded her with increaſed wonder. "I would give the world to know who you are," ſaid he, "and what has brought you into this deſert, for I am confident you are no common one." "You ſhall know who I am," returned Ellen, "and all I have undergone, when I return you the money,

ney, and then you will acknowledge that the human mind may ſupport any deſtiny, however hard, which has not been brought on by miſconduct." "I believe you are a parſon in petticoats," ſaid Mr. Raymond. "No," returned Ellen, "I am no parſon, but I am a kind of a propheteſs, and I foretell that you will never know happineſs until you return to your wife and children." Mr. Raymond retreated a few ſteps, as if he recoiled from a dread of ſupernatural power. "I ſaid, when firſt I ſaw you, you were an angel, but now I believe you deal with the devil." "You ſhall know my dealings at ſome future hour," ſaid Ellen, and giving him a paper, added, "this is my direction, now give me yours?" "And muſt I wait 'till a future hour for the explanation of ſo much myſtery?" ſaid Mr. Raymond. "You muſt." "Well then, let it not be very diſtant." He then gave her a direction to himſelf under the name of Maſon, at a particular Hotel in Straſburg, and with reiterated wiſhes that her journey might prove more proſperous than it promiſed to do, he at length ſuffered her to depart.

This adventure did not appear half ſo ſingular in the eyes of Mr. Raymond as it did in thoſe of Ellen. The circumſtance of finding himſelf known to her, confirmed his former ſuſpicions, and he had no doubt but that the ſtory ſhe promiſed him, would only be a detail of the ingratitude and cruelty of ſome man of his own ſet, with whom he had aſſociated before he left London. But Ellen was ſtruck in no common degree with the ſingularity of meet-

meeting in the woods of Bohemia a man ſo nearly allied to her, in circumſtances ſo uncommon and ſo diſgraceful, that ſhe could not avail herſelf of their connexion to the alleviation of her own diſtreſſes, nor could ſhe forbear adverting to the power ſhe had had of adminiſtering from her ſcanty pittance to the wants of two people, who, had it not been for their vices, might have been in poſſeſſion of every comfort and every accommodation this world can afford.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XXIII.

——"I to bear this,
"That never knew but better, is ſome burthen."

SHAKESPEARE.

THIS adventure furniſhed Ellen with ſufficient food for thought as ſhe walked on, and as the day was much cooler than any ſhe had yet experienced, ſhe continued her journey without taking her uſual reſt at noon, fortunately ſhe arrived at a decent village early in the evening, and here ſhe reſolved to take up her repoſe for the night, the fatigues of the preceding day and night having made reſt abſolutely neceſſary for her. In anſwer to the inquiries ſhe made here, ſhe had the ſatisfaction to find that ſhe had not deviated very widely from the direct road to Egra. She had fixed upon this place merely as a point, by which to direct her enquiries by, but there was nothing ſhe wiſhed ſo much to avoid as large towns and cities, and being now pretty well ſkilled in the beſt manner of going from one village to another, without ſtraying too far diſtant from the public road, ſhe contrived in about fourteen days from the time of her eſcape from captivity, to enter Franconia, without paſſing through Egra, or having ſuffered much either from fatigue, hunger, or alarm.

alarm. Having thus happily accompliſhed what ſhe computed to be ſomewhat above the firſt hundred miles of her journey, ſhe drew a lucky preſage for the remaining eight; but accuſtomed as ſhe now was to being alone, ſhe felt a dread that part of her travels which was to lead her amongſt the more thickly inhabited parts of the road, more than any one of the dangers that awaited her in the obſcure foreſts and ſolitary paths. The obſervation of Mr. Raymond often returned to her mind, and when ſhe reflected on the different treatment that the beggars wandering through the populous ſtreets of a great city uſually meet with, to that ſhe had experienced in the Bohemian wilds, ſhe could not help drawing a concluſion, that a cloſe neighbourhood was not favourable to the virtue of hoſpitality.

Theſe reflections made her view her ſingle ducat with a ſigh, but ſhe reſolved, as long as the ſale of her linen, her mandoline, or the poor ducat in queſtion, could preſerve her from the neceſſity of it, not to aſk charity in any town. Ellen continued her method of travelling with tolerable ſucceſs, though ſhe found a very ſenſible difference in the appearance and manners of the country; the latter was more populous, it was better cultivated, but beggars were more numerous, and ſimple hoſpitality leſs. Although ſhe was readily relieved at a door, ſhe no longer found it ſo eaſy to be admitted under the ſhelter of a friendly roof, her muſic was leſs an equivalent for all the kindneſs that was ſhewn her. Ellen, who could not pay for a lodging, and whoſe

whoſe ſoul recoiled from aſſociating with the herds of common beggars that ſo frequently croſſed her way, was therefore neceſſitated often to content herſelf with what accidental cover ſhe could find, and which frequently amounted to nothing better than what a wall afforded, where, with her head upon her bundle, ſhe often ſought for that ſleep ſhe could not find; and, ſometimes, overcome with fatigue, even in this expoſed and comfortleſs ſituation, ſlept ſoundly.

Theſe frequent ſleepings, expoſed to the open air, or in ſituations little ſheltered from the weather, made more ſubſtantial cloathing neceſſary; ſhe durſt not part with the only piece of money ſhe was poſſeſſed of, for however ſhe might hope ſhe ſhould receive the ſupply promiſed her by Mr. Raymond at Cologne, ſhe was too prudent to act as if ſhe were certain of it. Her mandoline ſhe now found of little uſe to her, and ſhe was therefore reſolved to make that the firſt ſacrifice. Its real value was ſmall, and in her preſent circumſtances ſhe was not likely to get even that value for it, but ſhe thought herſelf happy in exchanging it for a rug cloak, which made a part of her bundle in the day, and covered her warmly over at night.

Thus ſhe paſſed through the heart of Germany, keeping on the north of the Mayne, and directing her courſe towards Frankfort. She found the little German ſhe at firſt poſſeſſed very ſerviceable to her, and ſhe daily increaſed her ſtock, ſo that ſhe now found no difficulty in explaining her wants; indeed her difficulties

difficulties did not lie in explaining, but in relieving them, and they every day became more numerous and diſtreſſing. Her firſt pair of ſhoes were almoſt worn out, her clothes grew thin, and though, from habit, ſhe could now walk more miles in the courſe of a day than ſhe could when firſt ſhe ſet out, ſo long a continuance of hardſhips and fatigue began to have an effect upon her ſtrength, and ſtill more upon her ſpirits; the hope which had at firſt buoyed her up, began to ſubſide; for as ſhe reflected upon the diſtance there was ſtill between her and England, ſhe began to think it impoſſible that her powers of ſtruggling with the difficulties that ſurrounded her, would continue to her journey's end; a degree of deſpondency followed ſuch thoughts, and this increaſed the very evils ſhe feared: She endeavoured, however, to rouſe herſelf, to awaken hope once more in her heart, and to derive all the comfort from her undiminiſhed reliance on the goodneſs and wiſdom of Providence, that ſuch reliance was calculated to afford: She adverted to the extraordinary circumſtances of her having met with Mr. Raymond, and the aſſiſtance it was probable ſhe ſhould receive from him, and ſhe was not unwilling to yield to the degree of ſuperſtition that induced her to believe this might be one mark of the ſuperintendance of Providence, which, whether evident or not, ſhe never for a moment doubted.

Having revived her hopes, and ſtrengthened her courage by ſuch conſiderations as theſe, ſhe purſued her way towards Frankfort, but

following

following her original plan, ſhe entered not that place, but turned aſide to a village not far diſtant, and where ſhe arrived in ſomewhat leſs than a month from the time ſhe had entered Germany. Here ſhe heſitated whether ſhe ſhould proceed to Mentz, and from thence attempt taking a paſſage on the Rhine; the eaſe this would be to her was her ſtrongeſt inducement, but ſhe doubted whether the ſale of all ſhe was worth would enable her to defray the expences of her voyage, and the queſtion recurring, what ſhe ſhould do when thus without any reſource but the precarious one of charity during the reſt of her journey, ſhould ſhe find herſelf diſappointed of the promiſed ſupply at Cologn, determined her to truſt to her feet ſome time longer: ſhe directed her courſe, however, as nearly as ſhe could towards the Rhine, thinking it prudent to be within reach of the only mode of conveyance which her circumſtance would allow her to avail herſelf of, however her ſtrength might fail, or her health ſink under her fatigue.

The romantic and highly cultivated country that this determination led her through, could not be viewed by Ellen, even in her preſent ſtate of depreſſion, without the livelieſt emotions of delight. The picturesque ſituation of the villages, the ſtriking forms of the hills, each crowned with a caſtle, the vineyards, the cheſnut groves, all formed a ſcene ſuch as ſhe had never before witneſſed, and which filled her mind with images of beauty perfectly new; ſhe obſerved, however, the extreme

treme inequality that a wine country produces in its inhabitants, even of the ſame rank; and the ſplendid ſituation in which ſhe ſaw ſome of the peaſants, did not in her eyes compenſate for the ſight of the many poor people with which many of the villages ſwarmed. This was a country, however, in which Ellen herſelf fared very well, ſhe often gathered cheſnuts enough to ſerve her for a meal, when no other was to be had, and wine ſhe ſometimes received gratis, and at others could purchaſe for a trifle; ſhe found no difficulty in exchanging ſome of her linen, either for a little money, or for ſuch food as was neceſſary for her; it was, however, with the greateſt economy that ſhe made uſe of this reſource; but by the prudent management of that, never forgetting the conſideration of the future hour in the wants of the preſent, and of the other means that were in her power, ſhe was enabled to move on proſperouſly though ſlowly towards her point. The beauties of the country leſſened as ſhe approached Cologn, and when ſhe ſet her foot within that dark and ugly city, her heart ſunk from a mingled ſenſation of diſguſt and fear; the wandering, unknown, and unprotected, thro' the diſmal and half deſerted ſtreets of this decaying place, where ſhe was ſurrounded by falling and empty houſes, appeared to her infinitely more dreary and depreſſing than all the thick foreſts and extended wilds ſhe had hitherto paſſed. She would have inſtantly quitted a place ſo uncongenial with her feelings, and ſought ſhelter in ſome of the numerous

merous farm houſes which ſurround its walls, and where ſhe might have refreſhed herſelf with milk and vegetables, had ſhe not been eager to aſcertain what ſhe had to hope from the promiſes of Mr. Raymond.

With ſome difficulty ſhe inquired her way to the Hotel, to which he had given her a direction, and ſoon found, with more grief than ſurpriſe, that there was no letter for her. The very precarious circumſtances in which ſhe had left Mr. Raymond ſufficiently accounted for the breach of his promiſe to her, and without accuſing him of any intentional deceit, or criminal neglect, ſhe withdrew, congratulating herſelf upon the prudence with which ſhe huſbanded her little ſtore, and which ſhe now found was to be her only dependance.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XXIV.

" There cannot be a pinch in death
" More ſharp than this is."

SHAKESPEARE.

AS ſhe had entered the Hotel ſhe had obſerved two carriages, that ſeemed by their appearance, and the people who were employed about them, to belong to ſome traveller of diſtinction, but ſhe had paid little attention to them; on her return, however, one of the ſervants ſtood ſo directly in her way, that ſhe was obliged to ſtop 'till he removed; the moment he ſaw that he was an hindrance to any one, he made way with a civility that Ellen was conſcious was not paid to her appearance, on her thanking him, he turned ſuddenly round, as if ſtruck by the tone of her voice, when, what were her emotions when ſhe knew him for the perſonal ſervant of Mr. Villars! The man marked not the confuſion into which he had thrown her, for no ſooner did his eyes ſweep haſtily over her dreſs, than he ſeemed to have abandoned the thought that had before ſuddenly occurred, and he returned to his buſineſs, which was diſpoſing ſome parcels within the carriage, with undivided attention.

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The effect that ſuch an unexpected rencounter had upon Ellen was ſo great, that for a moment ſhe was unable to ſtir, but recollecting herſelf, ſhe conſidered that ſhe had no proof that this perſon was ſtill in the ſervice of Mr. Villars, and that if he were, there was nothing ſhe ought more to avoid than the diſcovering herſelf to him; theſe thoughts made her remove from the place ſhe was in, as ſpeedily as her trembling limbs would allow; but ſhe felt it impoſſible to quit Cologn, without being aſſured whether or no Mr. Villars was there; ſhe therefore took ſhelter in a baker's ſhop, which was immediately oppoſite the Hotel, and where ſhe hoped ſhe might be allowed to remain until the carriages moved off, eſpecially as it was plain from the buſtle among the ſervants that this would ſoon take place.

Many and divers were the thoughts that occupied Ellen as ſhe watched from her retreat the motions of the people employed in making the neceſſary preparations for their departure. If the maſter of thoſe ſervants ſhould prove Mr. Villars, the deſire of diſcovering herſelf to him ſeemed almoſt irreſiſtible; her neceſſitous ſituation, the nearneſs of his relation to her, the perfect innocence which had always accompanied the whole of their intercourſe, made her in one moment decide that ſuch ſubſtantial advantages as would accrue from her making herſelf known to him, were not to be ſacrificed to punctilios and the fear of miſconſtruction; but the reflections of the next inſtant corrected this too flattering

flattering but unjuſt concluſion. Whether ſhe were ever again to live with Sir William, or whether ſhe were to be regularly ſeparated from him, her juſtification and her all of happineſs in this life would depend upon being able to clear every hour of her life from ſuſpicion: Her return to England with Mr. Villars would make this impoſſible: Her ſenſe of propriety alſo revolted from the making the man who had never ceaſed to be her lover, the firſt confidant of Sir William's jealouſy and ill uſage; a converſation between them on ſuch a ſubject muſt place them equally in the moſt critical and embarraſſing circumſtances, it muſt unavoidably recall ideas and ſentiments that neither ought to feel and ſtill leſs to avow; regret and reſentment muſt ariſe in the breaſts of both, when canvaſſing the conſequences of a marriage that had broken aſunder all the ties that love had formed between them, and it could hardly be ſuppoſed that the lover would not be tempted to ſeek revenge for the injuries done to the object of his affections, where the natural relation that he held to her would ſeem to give him a right to be the puniſher of her oppreſſor.

Ellen ſaw ſhe had but one reſolution to take, but ſcarcely ever before had ſhe found her will ſuch a rebel to her reaſon. While ſhe was engaged in theſe reflections, ſhe obſerved that a lady's maid was alſo buſied about the carriages: Ellen's firſt thought on ſeeing her was, that ſhe might have ſpared all her debatings. Henry was not near her, for Henry

was not married; the next reminded her of the length of her abſence from England, and of her ignorance of all that had taken place there during that period: This thought was followed by another—if he was married, all objection to making herſelf known to him would vaniſh: ſhe ſtepped out of the ſhop with a deſign to make an inquiry of one of the ſervants, when her better reaſon cauſed her as haſtily again to enter it. There was no doubt but that Mr. Villars believed her dead, it was uncertain what would be the effect upon him of her ſudden appearance in ſuch peculiar and afflicting circumſtances, his emotions might be miſtaken, and ſhe might by this act of ſelfiſh gratification introduce the fiend jealouſy into the breaſt of a woman, who now believed herſelf happy in his undivided love; if the firſt wiſh of Ellen's heart had been to make the happineſs of Henry herſelf, it had long given place to a ſecond, little leſs fervent, that of ſeeing him happy with ſome worthy object, who, in deſerving all his love, poſſeſſed, and returned it; probably he had now found ſuch an one, and no perſonal inconvenience could weigh with Ellen againſt the ſlighteſt hazard of an interruption of their mutual happineſs: She reſolved therefore to give up every thought of diſcovering herſelf to him, but ſhe waited in breathleſs impatience, and with an agitation not to be deſcribed, the moment that would clear up all her doubts; ſhe waited not long; ſcarcely had ſhe decided to remain concealed when the maſter of the carriage appeared,

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it was Henry himſelf! he was in deep mourning, and leaning familiarly upon his arm was a young genteel looking woman, in deep mourning alſo: Ellen's heart beat, ſhe gaſped for breath: Henry aſſiſted his companion to get into the carriage, and immediately jumping after her, the door was ſhut, and they were driven away full ſpeed; the other carriage drove up, two ſervants entered it, and with two others on horſeback, followed the firſt carriage.

Ellen ſtood immovably fixed, with her eyes eagerly following the whole train until not a glimpſe of them remained to be ſeen, then burſting into tears ſhe haſtily left the ſhop almoſt unconſcious that ſhe had ever entered it, and wholly unknowing where ſhe meant to go. A few moments brought her to her recollection, but ſuch was the indeſcribable anguiſh that had ſeized her, that for ſome time ſhe thought, in the varied vexations of her diſtreſsful life, ſhe had never known ſo bitter a moment as the preſent: To have been obliged, in the helpleſs and wretched ſtate ſhe was in, to ſuffer him who would have been the ſofteſt ſoother of her ſorrow, her warmeſt friend, her moſt ſtrenuous protector, thus to depart unaſſiſtant to her wants, and unconſcious of her diſtreſs, preſſed ſo heavily on her mind the ſeverity of her fate, and ſhewed her to herſelf ſo far removed from all human aid, that for a time even her ſtrong and well diſciplined mind was not able to bear up againſt ſuch a weight of wretchedneſs. If Cologn had before appeared diſ-

guſting, it was now become inſupportable; ſhe hurried to get beyond its hated walls. The three claſſes of people, beggars, eccleſiaſtics, and nobles, into which its inhabitants are divided, were all alike indifferent to her, nor was the uglineſs or deſolation of the city itſelf any longer objects of attention or ſolitude; her mind contained but one idea, Henry carried rapidly from her when ſhe moſt ſtood in need of his friendſhip and aſſiſtance; no other thought found admiſſion into her mind, ſhe felt, ſhe ſaw, ſhe thought of nothing elſe.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XXV.

"Hope humbly then, to doubt is to rebel,
"Let us exult in hope that all will yet be well."

BEATTIE.

WHEN Ellen got again beyond the city walls, ſhe ſeemed to breathe more freely, the tumult of her mind began to ſubſide, ſhe began to acknowledge that no new misfortune had befallen her, that ſhe was in no reſpect worſe in conſequence of what had happened; that Henry placed beyond the power of aſſiſting by diſtance, or by ſituation, was the ſame thing in effect, and that if ſhe had been able to bear the one with patience, there was no reaſon why ſhe ſhould find the other intolerable.

Having thus reſtrained that power of imagination, which is never indulged but to our hurt, with a recompoſed mind ſhe began once more to call a council of her own thoughts, as to what was the beſt method in which to proceed; her finances ſeemed to allow her little choice, and ſhe reſolved keeping as near to the Rhine as poſſible, to make the beſt of her way to Nimeguen, and from thence to Helvoetſluys. But the days were now conſiderably ſhortened, and the proportional length of the nights made the truſting to any

or no ſhelter, that might or might not be near when darkneſs came on, more formidable and grievous than ever. Ellen therefore often found herſelf obliged to ſacrifice what would have procured her a meal, to the now almoſt equally neceſſary comfort of a lodging ſecured from the weather; ſhe ſtill avoided reſting in any towns, and made her way from village to village, which in the populous and cultivated country which lies near the Rhine, between Cologn and Nimeguen, ſhe found it not difficult to do, nor had ſhe reaſon to complain of want of humanity or charity in the people; her gentle manners, her being a foreigner, and above all, the langour and melancholy that had now too ſtrongly taken poſſeſſion of every feature, ſeemed to plead irreſiſtibly in her favor: To a night's lodging, and a bowl of milk in the morning, were often added, on diſmiſſing her, a few ſtivers, or a ſlice of bread that ſerved for her dinner; the money ſhe carefully hoarded for her paſſage to England was perpetually in her mind, and the means when there, that ſhe ſhould take to arrive in Northumberland.

In this manner and by ſlow degrees, ſhe reached Nimeguen, without any material evil, or extraordinary adventure: It was at Nimeguen ſhe had croſſed the Rhine, when ſhe travelled with Sir William, and ſhe was well acquainted with the different routes to be purſued, and the manners of the people in Holland: But ſhe well knew the difference of ſituation in a country where nothing is to be had without money, between the wife of a rich

rich Engliſh man of fathion, and a poor mendicant, whoſe very exiſtence depended upon the charity of others; that country where a man pays for the few moments that his great coat lies upon a bench, cannot be very favorable to the wants of any individual, who does not contribute ſomething to the great ſtock of national wealth, and Ellen could not condemn the principle that made a nation hard-hearted to beggars, whoſe very exiſtence depended upon the induſtry of all. The little ſuſtenance ſhe took ſhe therefore contrived in ſome way to pay for, and as the cheapneſs of a conveyance by the Trechſcuits enabled her to avail herſelf of them, as a ſuſpenſion of her hitherto never-ceaſing fatigue, ſhe reached Helvoetſluys eaſily and ſomewhat recruited in ſtrength. Fortunately ſhe arrived only a few hours before the ſailing of a packet, in which ſhe eaſily procured a paſſage, and at an expence proportionate the meanneſs of her appearance. The only paſſengers of any faſhion were a gentleman and lady, who had few attendants and appeared not to be rich; both the lady and her only female ſervant were ſufferers in the greateſt degree from ſea ſickneſs, and as Ellen was happily free from all indiſpoſition, and the only woman beſides themſelves in the packet, ſhe attended them, at the requeſt of the lady's huſband, in the cabin, and afforded them all the aſſiſtance and comfort in her power: the paſſage was proſperous, and not of the longeſt kind, and when they landed, the gentleman, in conſideration of Ellen's cheerful attendance upon his wife, and judging

by her clothes that ſhe was by no means above receiving a ſmall gratuity, gave her before they parted five ſhillings.

Ellen was now in England, but the emotion with which ſhe once again put her foot upon her native land, after ſo long and ſo diſaſtrous an abſence, were not thoſe of unmixed joy, or even of very cheerful hopes. During her tedious and difficult journey ſhe had ſeldom had leiſure, from the preſſing wants of the paſſing hour, to turn her thoughts upon the fate that might await her if ever ſhe ſhould ſo far ſurmount thoſe wants as to accompliſh the purpoſe ſhe had in hand; but now, when nearly all her difficulties were over, and her neceſſities drawing to a concluſion, the ſituation ſhe ſhould find her friends and family in, with what might be the reſolutions that circumſtances, or the requiſitions of Sir William might call for on her part, filled her mind with anxiety and dread: So far from knowing what to hope, ſhe knew not what to wiſh; and if the idea of being regularly ſeparated from Sir William, and being allowed to live unmoleſted with her father, by occurring the moſt frequently to her imagination, ſeemed to ſay that this was really what would be moſt acceptable to her, there were ſo many conſiderations that checked the riſing deſire, that it amounted not to a wiſh.

She had a child! (at leaſt ſhe hoped ſhe had) and for the ſake of this child ſhe would have conſented to have been placed in a ſituation much more repugnant to her feelings than a re-union with Sir William would place her

in;

in; even of Sir William's conduct towards her ſhe was cautious of forming a too decided opinion, and if it could be proved that he had been miſtaken, and not malicious, ſhe felt nothing within her unreſentful heart that ſhould prevent her endeavouring, by a life of duty and affection, to obliterate from the minds of both all the miſery they had mutually cauſed each other.

It was impoſſible not to think of theſe things; it was impoſſible that thinking of them ſhould not ſink her to the loweſt degree of ſadneſs, but it was equally impoſſible that ſhe ſhould form one probable conjecture how ſhe ſhould in future be induced to act. Her impatience, however, to bring her fate to an iſſue, increaſed to a feeling of the moſt painful kind: But, although in England, ſhe was ſtill more than two hundred miles from that home where ſhe could alone be ſure of a kind reception, or where ſhe could inform herſelf of thoſe circumſtances upon which the conduct of her future life muſt depend. To appear as a beggar in a country, the laws of which provide ſo amply for the wants of the indigent, as at firſt ſight ſeemed to render it impoſſible that vice and beggary ſhould be disjoined, and where thoſe very laws, acting as it were upon this ſuppoſition, make the very act of aſking charity criminal, and aſſign a puniſhment for it, was a ſituation that to Ellen appeared intolerable. The ſeaſonable ſupply of the five ſhillings given her by the gentleman, reſcued her from a neceſſity, to which, however, ſhe muſt otherwiſe have ſubmitted.

She had indeed, during the ſad reflections that occupied her mind on this ſubject during her paſſage from Holland, debated whether ſhe ſhould not, on her arrival in England, make her caſe known to ſome Magiſtrate; and it is probable ſhe would have had recourſe to this method rather than have appeared in the character of a vagabond, had ſhe continued as intirely deſtitute as ſhe was previous to the gift of the five ſhillings, but ſhe was very thankful to be ſaved from this extremity, ſince reſolute not to have told a falſe tale, ſhe muſt have been obliged, both againſt her inclination and judgment, to have told at leaſt ſo much of the truth, as might have led to diſcoveries, which ſhe was ſenſible ought to be made only to her neareſt relations, and moſt aſſured friends; ſo ſeaſonable and ſo important was a gift, in itſelf ſo ſmall, that probably the giver would ſcarcely place it, in ballancing his account, on the ſide of charity. With this five ſhillings, which had proved a mine of wealth to Ellen, and by the ſale of almoſt every thing ſhe poſſeſſed, except the miſerable clothes ſhe wore, Ellen was enabled to procure a paſſage in a coaſting veſſel, which was to ſail the next day for Newcaſtle, and alſo to provide for her ſuſtenance on the voyage.

## CHAP. XXVI.

"Oh, take the wanderer home."

BEATTIE.

NOTWITHSTANDING the lateneſs of the ſeaſon, the paſſage proved a happy and tolerably ſhort one, and Ellen at length beheld herſelf landed within thirty miles of Groby Manor. But ſhe was now abſolutely pennyleſs, nor did ſhe poſſeſs a ſingle article of clothes, for which, in the opulent and money-getting town of Newcaſtle, ſhe would have been able to have found a purchaſer. Her objections to appearing as a common beggar, ſeeking her bread from door to door, were as ſtrong in Northumberland as in Eſſex, and the fear of applying to any perſon in any of the higher ranks of life ſtill ſtronger. It appeared impoſſible to her, that ſhe ſhould be able to tell ſuch a ſtory as would intitle her to any thing beyond the moſt common relief, to any perſon in her own country, without leading to queſtions which would either involve her in falſhood, or lead to the diſcovery of too much truth. One valuable ſhe was ſtill poſſeſſed of, this was her wedding-ring, and though it had only been

been the ſeal of miſery to her, ſhe ſelt an extreme reluctance to parting with it, but ſcruples and ſorrows founded only in imagination, ſhe was in the habit of ſubduing, her reaſon acknowledged that the giving up her wedding ring was the moſt eligible method of ſupplying her preſent wants, of any in her power. She was within a few yards of a ſilverſmith's ſhop, ſhe turned towards it, ſhe ſtopt for a moment at the door, ſhe dreaded to encounter the curioſity ſhe was aware the application ſhe was about to make would excite: ſhe heſitated, the ſame thoughts paſſed through her mind. But not compelled by the conviction that every other way to relieve her diſtreſs was ſtill more objectionable than this, ſhe entered the ſhop; ſhe entered it however with a look of ſo much embarraſſment and irreſolution, as drew on her the notice of the man who kept it. It was not until he had inquired twice in words, and with a manner perfectly civil, what ſhe wanted, that ſhe had courage to advance towards him: then taking off her worn-out glove, and drawing her ring from her finger, ſhe ſaid, with heſitation, "If, Sir, you would let me have three ſhillings, or half a crown, upon this ring, I ſhould think myſelf much obliged to you." She ſaw the man's eyes fixed inſtantly upon her hand, the whiteneſs of which, with the delicacy of its form, ill accorded with the ſhabbineſs of her garments, and the diſtreſs her preſent application indicated. "I am not accuſtomed to take pawns, Madam," ſaid the man. "Perhaps, then," replied Ellen, "you would give me the value of its weight, Sir?" "It muſt diſtreſs you, Madam,

dam, to part with your wedding ring," returned he, looking earneſtly in her face. "I would not willingly part with it entirely," ſaid Ellen, "if therefore you would be kind enough not to diſpoſe of it for a few days, I ſhould take it as a favor, in leſs than a week I hope to be able to repurchaſe it." "No, Madam," ſaid the man, "I will not take your ring; you are ſo like a lady that is dead, and who was always better than her word, that I will take yours for ſo ſmall a ſum as this," laying down five ſhillings, "and if I ſhould loſe it, I will think it is given to that lady, and I ſhall be very well ſatisfied." Ellen aſtoniſhed and embarraſſed, thought herſelf diſcovered, and eager to remove from the earneſt ſcrutiny of her new friend, haſtily took up the money, and ſaying, "I am indeed extremely obliged to you, Sir, I will take care not to diſcredit your friend," ſhe haſtened out of the ſhop; ſhe ſaw that the man followed her to the door of it, and attentively watched her, ſhe therefore turned as ſoon as ſhe could into another ſtreet, and with a beating heart and trembling limbs took ſhelter in the firſt ſhop that preſented itſelf, which could afford her any refreſhment. Here, as ſhe purchaſed ſome rolls, her thoughts were buſily employed in endeavouring to recollect the features of the ſilverſmith, whom ſhe was perſuaded muſt have ſeen her before, and who, it was probable that in her happier days ſhe had befriended. Suddenly the remembrance of the grandſon of old Deborah croſſed her mind, and in the kind relief juſt now granted her the recogniſed the grateful worth of that honeſt young man. Cheered by

by the recollection of an act of benevolence, which from the ſeaſonable return it had produced ſeemedto have placed her in a particular manner under the protection of Providence, Ellen purſued her way with a mingled ſenſation of delight and hope that had long been a ſtranger to her boſom. The five or ſix and twenty miles that now lay between her and the haven where ſhe hoped to repoſe after all her ſufferings, however it might have appeared ſix years ago as a gulph not to be paſſed by her, in circumſtances like the preſent, now ſeemed little more than a needle's point; ſhe felt no difficulty, ſhe apprehended no danger, ſhe thought every object familiar to her, ſhe imagined that ſhe muſt know every face that ſhe paſſed, and almoſt expected to be called by her name by every perſon ſhe met. The day however was ſomewhat advanced, and night came on, when ſhe was ſtill ſixteen miles from Groby Manor; ſhe eaſily procured herſelf a decent and comfortable accommodation for the night, (for ſhe was now rich and could pay ſumptuouſly for what ſhe wanted) but ſleep, which had often viſited her under the imperfect ſhelter of a wall, or when expoſed to the droppings of a tree, now fled the warm comforts of her preſent chamber; the thoughts of the next day filled her mind and held her eyes waking. She aroſe with the firſt rays of light and reſumed her journey.

It was a bright froſty morning, in the beginning of October, all nature looked cheerful, and Ellen's heart, which ſtill retained the impreſſions ſhe had received in the ſilverſmith's ſhop the day before, partook of the cheerfulneſs around

around her. As ſhe walked forward, theſe ſenſations ſubſided, and gave place to the fears that the probable changes which had taken place during the laſt four years in the home to which ſhe was returning, naturally gave riſe to. The day paſſed on, Ellen drew every hour nearer to that ſpot where alone in the whole courſe of her life ſhe had known happineſs, and where only ſhe could hope, if ever happineſs were to be her's again, to find it. Her emotions increaſed every ſtep ſhe advanced, ſometimes ſhe was obliged to ſtop for the refreſhment that the failing powers made neceſſary; at others to remain a few moments motionleſs where ſhe was, without the power of ſeeking any.

## CHAP. XXVII.

" From incoherent words and ſighs,
" Such wond'rous tranſports break,
" Far more than honied eloquence,
" With all her tongues can ſpeak :
" And now with ſtrong inquiring look,
" They ſearch each other's eye,
" And aſk if what they ſee be true,
" And doubt the real joy."

OLD BALLAD.

THE evening approached, and the diſtant chimnies of Groby Manor appeared. "If time," ſaid Ellen, "has not changed the habits of the dear inhabitants of that beloved manſion, this is the hour when they are about to aſſemble round the ſocial tea board; now the evening muſic, or the evening lecture begins: Oh! beloved friends! there awaits you an interruption to your pleaſures that will be infinitely dearer to you than them all." Ellen ſaid this as ſhe began to aſcend the hill that led by gentle windings to the houſe; ſhe had determined to approach it on that ſide which looked upon the valley leading to the parſonage, and to make her entrance if ſhe could through the windows of the common ſitting-room that opened from the ground: there it was likely that ſome, if not all the family

family would be aſſembled, and as the ſun was not yet ſet, ſhe did not fear finding her entrance barred. The tumult of her mind was ſuch, that her deſigns might rather be called impulſe than reaſoning, and as ſhe aſcended the hill her limbs could hardly ſupport her trembling frame. She reached the top, ſhe drew near the houſe, a plane tree was placed ſo near one of the windows as to prevent all objects beyond it from being ſeen from thence. It was on this ſide that Ellen approached, the window immediately behind the plane-tree was open, Ellen intended, or thought ſhe intended entering through it: She advanced, her tremblings increaſed, ſhe was obliged to ſupport herſelf againſt the trunk of the plane-tree; ſhe heard the ſound of an inſtrument, ſhe could ſee within the room, ſhe looked, at the harpſichord ſat the very lady ſhe had ſeen accompanying Mr. Villars ſix weeks before into his chaiſe at Cologn: Mr. Villars himſelf was at that moment behind her chair, and hanging upon her gown was a playful little girl; in another part of the room ſat Mrs. Raymond at work, and near her Mr. Mordaunt, and two young girls, who were alſo at work. Ellen remained ſpeechleſs, motionleſs, and gazing intently upon what ſhe ſaw, and yet unconſcious that ſhe ſaw any thing; every faculty was ſuſpended, a temporary ſtupor had ſeized her.

At this moment one of the girls raiſing her head from her work ſaw a figure under the plane-tree, "Who's there?" ſaid ſhe, in a voice of affright. "It is me," ſaid Ellen,

and

and ſprang forward, but ſhe could do no more; ſhe ſunk lifeleſs on the window frame.—— "What ſounds are thoſe?" cried Henry, he ruſhed toward her, he raiſed her in his arms, "It is — Oh! heavens, is *this* my Ellen?" "Ellen!" ſaid the aſtoniſhed and bewildered father, "Gracious God! haſt thou ſuffered her to leave thy manſions of bliſs to comfort her afflicted parent?"

Ellen was laid upon a ſofa, but ſhe continued ſenſeleſs, nor were thoſe who ſtood gazing round her more conſcious of exiſtence than herſelf; one of the young people leſs intereſted than the reſt in the ſcene before her, ran for aſſiſtance. The room was preſently filled with ſervants, Ellen began to revive, Henry kneeling before her had ſeized both her hands. "I have found her, I have again found her," repeated he, "and no power on earth ſhall part us more." Ellen heard him not, ſhe ſaw him not, ſhe ſaw only her father, and with a ſudden motion threw herſelf at his feet, he claſped her in his arms, "It is herſelf! ſhe is alive! Oh! bleſſed God, what wonders are theſe!" Although Ellen's worn-down frame was little able to ſupport ſuch violent and affecting emotions, yet being prepared for the ſcene, ſhe was the firſt to recover ſome degree of compoſure. "I am indeed reſtored to you," ſaid ſhe, "by little leſs than a miracle; let us not by our own vehemence make vain all that God has done for us," and looking around her, ſhe ſeemed to demand whether ſhe ſaw all the family that time and abſence had ſpared. Her father preſ-

ſed

ſed her to his heart. "You will ſee your ſiſters, they are married, they are happy; but your mother (let us not repine) inſtead of a mother's embraces receive thoſe of your daughter." "My daughter," ſaid Ellen rapturouſly, "is this my daughter?" The lovely child was already in her arms. "Deareſt infant!" ſaid Ellen, and overcome by the painfulneſs of her recollections, a riſing ſob checked her voice, and ſhe burſt into tears. "Then you, Madam," ſaid ſhe, as ſoon as ſhe could again ſpeak, and addreſſing herſelf to the young lady whom ſhe had ſeen at the harpſichord, "then you, Madam, are not the mother of this beloved baby?" "Her mother!" returned the lady, "how cruel has fortune been thus to make ſtrangers of ſuch near relations." "She is my ſiſter," cried Henry, "my youngeſt ſiſter, the exact image of my Ellen, the darling of my heart."

There was a queſtion that Ellen longed to aſk, yet knew not how. The manner and words of Henry, ſo different from any he had ever uſed ſince ſhe became a wife, ſuggeſted a thought that ſhe knew not how to expreſs, and by the variety of emotions it excited, preſſed upon her heart with a weight that was intolerable, ſhe threw herſelf into her father's arms, and hiding her face in his boſom, "Oh! my father," ſaid ſhe, "where is Sir William Ackland? Where is my huſband?" Be compoſed, deareſt creature," ſaid Mr. Mordaunt, "it is perhaps happy for us all that he can no longer anſwer for his conduct in this world." Ellen became ſuddenly ſick, "Let me

me retire, I beſeech you," ſaid ſhe, "poor unhappy man! (tears running down her cheeks) miſtaken, or cruel, I equally pity you." Mrs. Raymond and Mr. Mordaunt withdrew with Ellen, and Henry accompanied her to the door of Mrs. Raymond's room, carrying the little girl in his arms, from whom Ellen could not bear to be ſeparated a ſingle moment. Ellen was unable to ſupport herſelf any longer, and at her own requeſt ſhe was put to bed, and all parties being in poſſeſſion of the great outlines of thoſe events that it moſt concerned them to know, all farther explanation was, by mutual conſent, deferred. Mrs. Raymond could not conſent to quit Ellen's bed-ſide during the night, in ſpite of her remonſtrances, who told her ſmiling, ſhe was much more accuſtomed to be left wholly to her own care, than ſhe could be to ſpend a night in watching. "In this bed, in this room," added ſhe, "with a table covered as that is, with every thing that can tempt the appetite, or mitigate the pains of ſickneſs, I am much more likely to be ſleepleſs from aſtoniſhment than from any fear or want of accommodation."

Mrs. Raymond, who could not feel the full force of this obſervation, yet underſtood enough of it to be unable to reſtrain her tears, at the thoughts of the former hardſhips to which Ellen alluded. "It ſeems ſo impoſſible," returned ſhe weeping, "that you ſhould be really here, that were I to leave you for a moment, I ſhould not expect to find you on my return."

Henry

Henry was no ſooner appriſed by Mr. Mordaunt that he muſt not hope to ſee Ellen that night, than he ſet off to the parſonage: The tale he had to tell was ſo beyond all credibility, that his friends there for ſome minutes believed him raving; but ſeeing nothing in his looks or manner to confirm ſuch an opinion, their feelings became little leſs agitated than his own; the fact that he ſo conſtantly averred, that Ellen was alive, and at Groby Manor, he pretended not to account for or explain, and though they began to be convinced that he doubted not the truth of what he ſaid, yet they could not perſuade themſelves that he was not by ſome means deceived; they reſolved therefore to verify his words by the evidence of their own ſenſes, and, late as it was, Mr. and Mrs. Thornton and Mary, who, (although ſhe had been married a twelvemonth) ſtill continued at the parſonage, reſolved to accompany him to Groby Manor. Mr. Mordaunt had taken his ſtation in a corner of Ellen's bed-chamber; for to ſeparate from her he found to be impoſſible, and he thought the loſs of ſleep amply recompenſed by ſeeing her breathe, and ſometimes hearing her ſpeak: Miſs Villars and the two young Raymond's were in the parlour, waiting the return of Henry; they confirmed to the wondering Thornton's the events of the evening, and their mutual joy and aſtoniſhment, with the variety of exclamations and conjectures that engaged them, ſo perfectly baniſhed all deſire of ſleep and reſt from the whole party, that it was determined they ſhould

ſhould ſit up together for the remainder of the night. Henry and Mary often ſtole gently to the door of Ellen's room, they liſtened, all was quiet, they hoped ſhe ſlept. They returned to the parlour to communicate their hopes to their friends, and then again crept to the door to confirm them to themſelves. Ellen, however, was ſleepleſs, but the quiet ſhe impoſed on herſelf enabled her to collect her thoughts, and to prepare for the renewed emotions of the next day.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XXVIII.

——— "Try'd but not ſubdu'd
"Doth ſhe appear."

GLOVER.

THE next day at length came, and Ellen found her bed inſupportably irkſome to her, ſhe could no longer delay the knowledge of a thouſand particulars ſo intereſting to her, and ſo important to her happineſs; nor was the impatience of her friends much leſs than her own. Mrs. Raymond furniſhed her with clothes; for whatever Ellen could have done, none of her family would have borne to have ſeen her in thoſe tattered and worn out garments, that were ſuch painful indications of the hardſhips ſhe had ſuffered.

The reſult of the reflections ſuggeſted through the whole of Ellen's wakeful night, had been a determination to learn from her father, in a converſation between themſelves, all the circumſtances attendant on Sir William's death, and the actual ſituation of Henry, it having appeared plainly to her, in the few words that ſhe had yet heard him utter, that his ſentiments towards her were the ſame as ever, and that his hopes of poſſeſſing her were now again riſen as high as in the happieſt days of their mutual affection; but Ellen had too long

long been accuſtomed to place the curb of reaſon upon her wiſhes, to ſuffer them alone to influence her actions; ſhe had long ceaſed to conſider Henry as her lover, but ſhe had never ceaſed to entertain for him that friendſhip, which his virtues and his love towards her ſo well deſerved: If affliction had ſubdued her paſſions, it had awakened her affections; ſhe was now a mother, and ſhe felt that no conſideration on earth could tempt her to any act that might, in its remoteſt conſequences, be prejudicial to that dear infant ſo newly found and ſo highly cheriſhed; if, in her early youth, ſhe had yielded her partiality for the man of her choice, to a ſenſe of the duty he owed his parent, ſhe well knew now how to make it ſubmit to that which ſhe owed her child: But it was poſſible that duty and inclination might at length agree; Ellen's heart flattered her at the thought, but ſhe ſuffered it not to riſe into a wiſh; ſhe would have no wiſh on this ſubject unſanctioned by her father.

Ellen was ſcarcely dreſſed when ſhe deſired to ſee him; and the enraptured, yet anxious parent, flew to obey her ſummons; ſhe begged Mrs. Raymond would leave them together, but ſhe placed her little girl upon her knees. "I cannot fear," ſaid Ellen to herſelf, "any faulty impulſe of my heart, while I hold to it this pledge and reward of its rectitude. As Mr. Mordaunt viewed the languid and travel-worn figure of Ellen, as he conſidered the paleneſs of her cheek and the heavineſs

heavineſs of her eye, his emotions almoſt choaked him: "Oh! my child," ſaid he, "what muſt you not have ſuffered, and for what?" "Tell me, my father," ſaid Ellen, "how long you have ſuppoſed me dead?" "We were taught to believe you died in bringing that infant into the world." "And did Sir William appear afflicted for my loſs? and where and how has he lived ſince? and, above all, did he not in dying give you ſome reaſon to ſuppoſe I exiſted?" "He did not return to England 'till a twelvemonth after your ſuppoſed death; and then for the ſole purpoſe of placing his child under the care of a relation of his mother's, and it was not until after I had repeatedly urged him, by every motive I could imagine, to afford me the ſatisfaction of ſeeing him, that I could prevail upon him to make me a viſit: I was then attending your mother in her laſt illneſs, I could not go to him; he remained here only two days, and appeared the moſt wretched of men. I repented that any conſideration for ſelf had induced me to force him into a viſit that ſeemed ſo painful to him; yet there was ſomething in his grief that ill accorded with mine, it had more of fury and deſperation in it than ſoftneſs: Once, and only once, I attempted to lead him to ſpeak of you; he ſtarted from his chair, "Oh! name her not, ſhe has undone me! ſhe has ruined my peace for ever! Worthy old man!" continued he, "you know not how fatal a gift you beſtowed when you gave me your daughter!" I believed the violence of theſe expreſſions to be the ravings

of grief for a loſs, that my own ſufferings told me muſt to a huſband be almoſt paſt endurance. Ientreated he would let me ſee my grandchild, the ſole remains of Ellen: "She is not like her," returned he, "ſhe does not bear her name, ſhe will not I hope bear her features." "Oh! I hope ſhe will," returned I fondly, "and in time, Sir William, you will find comfort in what now perhaps might be too lively an emblem of what you have loſt." He ſeemed almoſt convulſed with paſſion: "No more," ſaid he, "if you would not drive me to madneſs." I ſought to ſooth him, and moſt carefully during the ſhort time he afterwards ſtayed with me, did I avoid a ſubject that I now ſaw he could not bear: He remained ſome months in London, and I heard from every one of the deep ſhade of grief that was impreſſed on his behaviour and countenance. He quitted England the following ſpring, and returned to it no more: Four months are ſcarcely paſt ſince he died ſuddenly, with no previous illneſs, at Vienna: I was informed of the event by a Bohemian nobleman, whom I underſtood to have been Sir William's intimate friend; there were ſome words in this gentleman's letter of which I never until now could gueſs the meaning, but which muſt certainly have alluded to the unhappy miſtake, from which my beloved child muſt have ſuffered ſo much, and which appears to have made Sir William's life entirely wretched; theſe words ſeemed ſo intimate, that had Sir William been allowed time for any death-bed reflections, he might have

have been induced to have mitigated the ſeverity of ſome determination, the juſtice of which had not been ſufficient to ſatisfy him under the rigour of it. I conſidered this intimation merely as a ſort of an apology for ſome action of Sir William's which might ſome time probably come to my knowledge, which his friend was conſcious would ſtand in need of one."

"I found," continued Mr. Mordaunt, for Ellen broke not in upon his diſcourſe, "that the guardians appointed to your dear infant were people unknown to me, and wholly unconnected with my family, and it ſeemed as if Sir William wiſhed to keep her as far apart from every one of us as poſſible; but my heart longed to ſee her, and our dear Henry, who has been my guardian-angel under all my troubles, and is now the ſupport of my declining age, procured me this bleſſing, as he has done many others: He prevailed upon the lady with whom ſhe is placed, to truſt her to the care of his ſiſter and himſelf, when they were about to make a viſit to Northumberland; they have been with me ten days, and there has not been an hour in any one of thoſe days in which Henry and I have not ſoothed our never ceaſing regret by endeavouring to trace your features in the lineaments of that infant's face."

Ellen felt that her heart was not indifferent to this panegyric upon Henry. "And Lord Villars," aſked ſhe, "does he ſtill purſue the ſame projects of ambition and avarice, ſo often defeated but never given up?" "Lord Vil-

lars," repeated Mr. Mordaunt, "do you not know—but alas! you cannot know—there is now no other Lord Villars than Henry." "Gracious heaven!" ſaid Ellen, and her pale cheek became ſtill paler. "He died of a liver complaint about three months ago," continued Mr. Mordaunt, "his death was foreſeen, and Henry croſſed the channel to bring home his ſiſter, who had been ſome time abroad with Lady Edwards, but Lord Villars died before they could return, before indeed Henry had reached the place where his ſiſter then was. Since his return to England he has been wholly taken up with his family affairs, and it was not 'till within theſe ten days that he had leiſure to give me, what he knows to be my beſt comfort, his dearly beloved ſociety." "But, dear Sir," ſaid Ellen, "my brother, what of him, does he afford you no comfort?" "None, Ellen, none; he and Lady Almeria have no reliſh for the ſhades of a northern retirement, or for the ſociety of an old man, though that man is a father; their life is one unvaried round of diſſipation and expence, and the only ſatisfaction I reap from their union is, ſome times the company of ſome of their children of which they have three." "My ſiſters?" ſaid Ellen. "Are happily though not ſplendidly married; they are both ſettled in this country, and do every thing in their power to make my old age comfortable; my daughter Raymond and her two girls are kind and good to me; and now," cried he, claſping her in his arms, "ſince I once again embrace my

my Ellen, there is nothing this world has more to give." "And I," ſaid Ellen, "if I can bleſs the declining years of my father, and guard the opening dawn of this dear child, what more ſhall I have to aſk in this world?" "Oh! my Ellen," returned the delighted parent, "you have much more to aſk, and much more to do; you have to reward I will not ſay the conſtancy, for that may be objectionable, but the virtues of our Henry; happineſs too is in long arrears to you, and you may now reaſonably aſk for payment." "But can I," ſaid Ellen, "give my child another parent? Can I hazard her welfare on the ſhock of intereſts, ſo often the conſequence of a ſecond connexion?" "Who would you ſooner chooſe for a parent to your child," returned Mr. Mordaunt ſmiling, "than Henry? Who would you rather make the guardian of your deareſt intereſt than him? But I leave him to plead his own cauſe: My Ellen muſt have undergone a wonderful metamorphoſis indeed if ſhe found in her breaſt any impediment to his wiſhes from miſtaken delicacy, or weak punctilio, and every reaſon muſt be on his ſide: And now, my deareſt, let us go down together, I am impatient to hear your ſtory, but I will not detain you from your friends, whoſe tender intereſts in all that concerns you has kept them waking the whole night, and who are as impatient to ſee and hear you as myſelf."

## CHAP. XXIX.

" The form of virtue dignify'd the ſcene,
" In her majeſtic ſweetneſs was diſplay'd,
" The mind ſublime and happy. From her lips
" Seem'd eloquence to flow."

GLOVER.

" Laſt came joy's extatic trial."

COLLINS.

ELLEN aroſe, but ſhe was ſurpriſed when ſhe came to move to find herſelf ſo enfeebled and trembling, that ſhe could not but ſuppoſe, had her journey been prolonged one other day, ſhe muſt have ſunk under the fatigue; but ſhe recollected not how much more the emotions of the mind exhauſt the ſtrength than any labours of the body: What ſhe had undergone ſince her arrival in Northumberland had contributed more towards the deſtruction of her bodily powers, than all the hardſhips a pilgrimage of more than eight hundred miles had expoſed her to.

No ſooner was the door of her chamber heard to open, by her liſtening friends below, than Henry flew up ſtairs, and ſeeing her inability to ſupport herſelf, and that Mr. Mordaunt tottered with her weight, " Let me ſupport

ſupport you, my deareſt couſin," ſaid he, "it is a relation's office, you will not deny me." Ellen almoſt ſinking, ſuffered him to put his arms round her, but he was ſeized with ſo violent a fit of trembling that he was obliged for a moment to ſupport both himſelf and her by leaning againſt the wall. Ellen had been appriſed that the Thornton's were below, and they therefore having no fear of her ſuffering from the ſurpriſe of their ſudden appearance could no longer reſtrain their impatience, but haſtily followed Henry up ſtairs: It was fortunate they did ſo, for ſo great was his emotion become that he could not have ſupported Ellen another moment. Mr. Thornton claſped his arms round her, the beloved Mary received her ſinking head upon her boſom; while Mrs. Thornton half frantic with her joy, deluged her with perfumed water one moment, and ſtifled her with careſſes the next. A moment's conſideration convinced them all that Ellen was unfit to be removed down ſtairs; they therefore agreed to aſſemble in Mr. Mordaunt's library, which was immediately oppoſite the bed chamber aſſigned to Ellen. Henry could not however prevail upon himſelf again to quit her, and having regained ſteadier nerves, he carried her, with the aſſiſtance of Mr. Thornton, into the library, here being laid upon a ſofa, a few moments ſufficed to recompoſe her mind.

"I could not have ſuſpected myſelf of ſo much debility," ſaid ſhe ſmiling, "and when I come to tell you what I have been doing for the laſt three months, you will agree with

me, that I have little right to ſuch fine lady-like airs." "Oh!" cried Henry fervently, "you are weak, we all are weak from feelings no fine lady ever knew." Indeed the group that were now gathered round Ellen ſeemed to have forgotten all conſideration of ſelf, in the thoughts of the beloved object they encircled. Mr. Mordaunt had drawn a low ſtool cloſe to the ſofa, and held Ellen's hands in his. Henry was leaning over the back of it, with his eyes intently fixed upon her face; Mary was upon her knees, preſſing cloſe up between Mr. Mordaunt and Ellen, while the reſt of the party had diſpoſed of themſelves into a kind of outward circle, and all were alike emulative of the pleaſure of adminiſtering to Ellen's wants; one idea ſeemed to prevail with them all, that the miſeries ſhe had ſuffered, and the hardſhips ſhe had undergone, called for every indemnification in their power: Ellen had ſcarcely any voice, and, bathed in tears, was unable to look up: "I have not," ſaid ſhe, in broken and interrupted accents, "in all my ſorrows, ſhed ſo many tears from grief as I now ſhed from joy; but indeed I muſt not indulge myſelf; I muſt ſhake off this weakneſs; yet who ſhall wonder that the ſenſe of the mercies I have received is ſo overcoming?"

Impatient as the whole circle were to be acquainted with the every particular of Ellen's fate, they all with one voice declared againſt the indulgence of their curioſity 'till ſhe was ſomewhat more reſtored to compoſure; but ſhe was aware that this would never be while

ſhe

ſhe had ſo intereſting a ſtory to relate. "Believe me," ſaid ſhe, "that nothing is ſo likely to huſh theſe contending feelings as the dullneſs of narrative; I ſhall perhaps fatigue myſelf with the length of my ſtory, but ſuch fatigue will be ſalutary: I want ſleep, mine has been long broken, and for the two laſt nights wholly interrupted; if I can talk myſelf to ſleep, there is nothing from which I ſhall receive ſo much benefit; and to ſleep while I have ſuch a ſtory to tell is impoſſible."

The party drew cloſer round her, and Henry, half invited, found a ſeat on the ſofa, at her feet, as, ſupported by pillows, ſhe changed her poſture from that of lying down to a ſitting one. It cannot be doubted what were the emotions with which Ellen was liſtened to. Pity, admiration, grief, indignation, and aſtoniſhment, ſucceeded each other; but when ſhe came to relate the circumſtance which ſeemed to have ſealed her fate, and of which, being abſolutely ignorant, ſhe was at a loſs whether to impute to miſtake, or contrivance, Henry, in an agony he could not reſtrain, threw himſelf on his knees before her: "Oh! my Ellen," cried he graſping her hands, "my ſuffering, my ever beloved Ellen, do not, do not hate me! I am the wretch that have undone you: I conducted you to that hateful priſon, I cloſed its doors upon you; your agonizing days, your ſleepleſs nights, were all the gift of my hand: But, Oh! if you cannot pardon me, do not, do not hate me." "Oh! Henry," replied Ellen, gently returning the preſſure of his hand, "be aſſured I never entertained a ſentiment of *hatred*, even towards

the *real* author of my ſufferings, how then ſhould I hate *you?*" "And can you forgive me? And do you call me your dear Henry? Mr. Thornton pray for me, I ſhall not keep my ſenſes." "Nor," ſaid Mr. Thornton fervently, "ſuffer Ellen to keep hers: Can you admire the ſtrength of mind which has ſupported her through ſuch trying ſcenes, and yet deſert yourſelf ſo pitiably?" "But I was not tried with joy," ſaid Ellen, holding out her hands towards Henry, (who had haſtily let them go on hearing Mr. Thornton's rebuke) "and thoſe who have felt them both know how much more difficult it is to bear joy than ſorrow." Henry's tears rolled down his cheeks, he endeavoured to conceal his face as he ſtooped to kiſs again and again the dear hands he held: "Say," cried he, in accents ſcarcely articulate, "ſay you forgive me for all my faults." "Let us not talk of forgiveneſs," returned Ellen, "and but this once ſuffer me to aſſure you, that you have lightened my heart of the ſingle remaining weight that oppreſſed it, by clearing the memory of a man whom I would not contemn from the imputation of the only act of *villany* with which I could charge him: It is eaſy to pardon injuries originating in miſtake, and a miſtake too that I underſtand has coſt the unhappy perſon ſo deceived ſtill more than it has coſt me." Henry then explained how fatally his ſcrupulous attention to the delicacy and peace of Ellen had ſucceeded: He remembered the contents of Lady Almeria's note, though he could not at that diſtance of time

time call to mind the exact terms of it, and upon which Sir William's miſtake was grounded. The good heart of Mr. Mordaunt rejoiced equally with Ellen's, that there was ſo ſtrong an appearance of impropiety in the conduct of Henry, as to juſtify the confirmation it had given to thoſe injurious ſuſpicions which had, however, been before moſt unjuſtifiably taken up. Without ſuch an apology, Sir William muſt have appeared one of the worſt of men; but neither Mr. Mordaunt, nor the chriſtian Mr. Thornton, much leſs could Henry admit of any excuſe for the method he had taken to gratify his revenge, nor the right he had aſſumed to himſelf of ſo cruelly puniſhing offences for which the laws of his country has appointed a much leſs ſevere chaſtiſement: Nor will it be expected that the females of the party were more favorable to ſo *illegal* a proceeding; and Ellen, though ſhe did not chuſe to join in the condemnation, entered not into defence of a conduct which ſhe conſidered as indefenſible. In mentioning the adventure in the ruined Monaſtery ſhe carefully avoided naming the name of Mr. Raymond, though ſhe expatiated on the happy circumſtance it had proved to her, in procuring her the ducat, which ſhe had found of ſo much uſe. It was with the greateſt emotion that ſhe related what ſhe had felt on the ſight of Henry at Cologn. "And could you, did you," echoed from every mouth, "in ſuch circumſtances, in ſuch diſtreſs, could you ſuffer him to depart without making yourſelf known to him?" "What could I do?" cried Ellen, in a tone of ſelf defence, "what power on

on earth could have convinced Sir William of my innocence, had I returned to England with Henry? And would you have had me barter my reputation, and my only chance of happineſs, for an eſcape from hardſhips that I had already proved not to be inſupportable? But God only knows what it coſt me to make the choice I did!" "The choice!" ſaid Mr. Mordaunt rapturouſly, "the choice was like yourſelf; it was the reſult of the pureſt principle and the ſteadieſt reaſon: But this ſtory will kill us all, for God's ſake make haſte to arrive in England, or I too ſhall incur Mr. Thornton's cenſure, for my brain will hardly bear it." "Mr. Thornton," ſaid Mrs. Thornton, ſobbing, "has little reaſon to reproach you, look at him, did you ever ſee him ſo moved before?" "Oh! who would not be moved," ſaid Mr. Thornton, "at ſuch a proof of the ſtrength of rectitude, and the power of reaſon? And yet, wonderful as it appears, it is in the power of every one to whom God has given common underſtanding, and has not curſed with unnatural depravity, to act as uprightly and heroically as Ellen has done; all the reſt is the reſult of cultivation, or ſelf diſcipline, and of a continued habit of referring all our actions to principle." "My ever dear preceptor," ſaid Ellen, "if I have been able to act rightly I owe it to you, to my dear Mrs. Thornton, to my father; but chiefly I will ſay to *you*, who never ſparing of your praiſe when I deſerved commendation, gave it always with the ſame judgment

judgment you have now done, and by convincing me the path of virtue was practicable to all, made me aſhamed to repreſent it to myſelf as difficult." Henry could not ſpeak, he ſat with his face reſted upon the arm of the ſofa, in a ſtate of emotion that ſhook his whole frame; he heard not Mr. Thornton's moral; he gave no credit to the eaſy practicability of ſuch virtues as Ellen's; he thought her an angel, and that it was ſcarcely amongſt her fellow angels that ſhe was to be equalled. Ellen haſtened to conclude a narrative, the circumſtances of which ſo deeply affected her auditors; ſhe was happy to have the taſk over, and felt herſelf more capable of compoſure and reſt when it was done. She now learnt, what from the multiplicity of events each ſide had to communicate, had hitherto remained untold; that the unhappy Mr. Raymond had met the fate his vices provoked, and that inſtead of the ſafe retreat he had promiſed himſelf in Switzerland, the vengeance of an injured family had overtaken him in a few days from the time when Ellen had left him. Refuſing to ſubmit to the officers of juſtice, who were employed to ſecure him, he had attempted a defence, impoſſible to be made good, but which was conducted with ſo much violence and danger to his opponents, as had obliged them to attempt ſubduing him by means as deſperate as thoſe he had uſed in his defence: In this ſtruggle he had received wounds that proved mortal in a few days; his death had put Mrs. Raymond in poſſeſſion of a ſmall jointure, and had ſecured to his daughters the few thouſand pounds

pounds that had been ſettled upon them. Ellen now revealed that it was to Mr. Raymond that ſhe owed the ſeaſonable relief that ſhe had before mentioned, and expatiated on the earneſt deſire that he had ſhewn of being farther ſerviceable to her: To hear of ſuch praiſe-worthy diſpoſitions in a man whom ſhe had once loved, was very acceptable to Mrs. Raymond. But as ill uſage had long ago worn out her affection for him; his death had rather ſhocked than afflicted her, and in the preſent happier proſpects of her family ſhe ſoon learnt to conſider it rather as a releaſe than a misfortune. Ellen's two other ſiſters joined the happy party at Groby Manor the next day, and moſt unfeignedly partook of the joy that reigned there. In a few days Ellen recovered her uſual ſerenity of mind, and in a few weeks ſhe was perfectly reſtored to bloom and health.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XXX.

" Such a ſacred, and home-felt delight,
" Such ſober certainty of waking bliſs,
" I never knew 'till now."

MILTON.

AND now what avails it to prolong a narrative, the concluſion of which is already anticipated? Oppoſed by no one duty, ſupported by her own wiſhes, ſanctioned by the authority of a parent, can it be ſuppoſed that Henry's revived claim to the hand and heart of Ellen was diſallowed? Yet did ſhe feel an unſpeakable reluctance to becoming his wife, until her reputation was as ſpotleſs as her life: Her return to exiſtence muſt of neceſſity be known, and with it muſt be known the ſuſpicions that had ſo long held her in ſecluſion from the world; the death of Sir William made her vindication difficult, ſince no one could be aſſured of her innocence but thoſe who would naturally ſcreen her guilt. The moſt unequivocal teſtimony was that of the Bohemian nobleman, and to him it was reſolved to apply. Henry determining that if the matter could not be ſettled ſatisfactorily by letter, he would himſelf take a journey to Vienna. Mr. Mordaunt drew up a plain ſtatement of

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all the facts upon which he had reaſon to think Sir William had grounded Ellen's condemnation, Lady Almeria's teſtimony on thoſe which had ſeemingly been ſuch unequivocal marks of her guilt was added thereto, and the nobleman was entreated to declare whether Sir William laid any thing more to her charge than this explanation obviated. The natural eloquence of a parent trembling for the reputation of his child gave an energy to Mr. Mordaunt's entreaties and remonſtrances that muſt have affected any heart not wholly callous: The heart of the Bohemian was not of this nature; he had long entertained doubts of the guilt of a woman to whoſe excellencies Sir William's never ceaſing regrets had done reluctant juſtice; and ſince her eſcape he had received ſuch proofs from Mrs. Ulric of the purity of her mind and the goodneſs of her principles, as had well prepared him for the vindication of her conduct which he now received. The anſwer he returned was the moſt ſatisfactory poſſible.

He informed Mr. Mordaunt that Sir William himſelf had frequently declared in the laſt months of his life, that were it poſſible he could have been miſtaken in what his own ſenſes had witneſſed, he ſhould be perſuaded he had wronged the unfortunate Ellen: That remorſe for the ſeverity of the puniſhment he had inflicted, even ſuppoſing her guilty, had haunted every hour of his life, and that he ſeemed not unfrequently to regret the ſtrictneſs with which his orders, not to convey any letter or meſſage to him from her, had been obſerved;

obſerved; and that nothing withheld him from again ſeeking her but the inſupportable ſhame that muſt have overwhelmed him, either had ſhe been able to have cleared herſelf from the crimes imputed to her, or that would have attended his reſtoring her to the world, guilty or innocent; and that, finally, even the dread of this ſhame would probably have given way to the increaſing wretchedneſs of his mind, had his life been ſpared a little longer.

The Bohemian ſtated it as having been his own intention after the death of his friend, to have viſited Ellen in her priſon, and from the opinion that he ſhould have been able to have formed of her from ſuch an interview, to have regulated his own future conduct, as to the continuation of her impriſonment, or the putting a ſpeedy and final end to it. He ingenuouſly confeſſed that though, had he found her innocent, he ſhould have held his friend's reputation as nothing when compared with the injuſtice and cruelty of detaining her any longer a captive; yet, that had ſhe appeared to him guilty, he ſhould have preferred ſuffering her to languiſh out her life in perpetual confinement, to the fixing ſuch a ſtain upon Sir William's memory, as her reſtoration to the world and the publication of the whole ſtory muſt have done.

The generous Bohemian after congratulating the happy father on the innocence and eſcape of his daughter, informed him, that in order that no cloud might obſcure a happineſs ſo dearly purchaſed, and ſo amply deſerved, he had written a full vindication of her character,

racter, to the guardian of her child, and the truſtees of her ſettlement, and this he had done, he ſaid, not more from a conviction that by ſuch a teſtimony to her virtues he offered the moſt acceptable proof of his inviolable attachment to his deceaſed friend, than from the aſſurance he had in his own mind that he was offering a tribute to truth, and from the pleaſure that reſulted to himſelf, in an act of juſtice and compenſation.

In conſequence of this well judged and generous interference of this amiable Bohemian, Ellen found no difficulty in having her daughter given to her wiſhes; by this agency ſhe was enabled alſo to acquit herſelf, as far as money could acquit her, of obligations to the good Mrs. Ulric and the faithful Thereſa, nor can it be ſuppoſed that the grandſon of old Deborah was forgotten. Henry in the ample proviſion that his diſintereſted heart had apportioned to every branch of his family, had left himſelf poor, but he had more than ſufficient for happineſs: He revived the ſcheme which ſo many years before he had preſſed with ſo much fruitleſs earneſtneſs; Ellen and he reſolved to content themſelves with her jointure until his eſtate had cleared itſelf of every incumbrance; and, at the earneſt entreaty of Mr. Mordaunt, they took up their abode at Groby Manor, The cottage of old Deborah was enlarged and fitted up for the reception of Mrs. Raymond and her daughters, that they might (while always moſt welcome to Groby Manor) have a place to retire to, when under the dominion of that wiſh which

which is felt at times by every human mind, the wiſh, that as we ſhut the door upon us we may be able to ſay, "Now I am at home." Of the happineſs of Henry and Ellen, of the feelings of Mr. Mordaunt, of the contentment of the Thornton's, and of the peace and ſatisfaction of all within the reach of their benevolence, it were needleſs to tell. To all who have hearts and principles ſimilar to theirs all that could be ſaid would be ſuperfluous; to thoſe of oppoſite feelings and opinions it would be unintelligible.

Such then is the hiſtory of Ellen. Inſtructed by her example, let no one affirm the *omnipotency of love*, let no one aſſert the *uncontroulableneſs of ſorrow*: Be it remembered, that in the exertion of PLAIN SENSE, and the exerciſe of *unſhaken integrity* lay all her powers; and let not any one who means not to forego his claim to ſuch diſtinctions, plead his excuſe for *vice* or *weakneſs the dominion of paſſion*, or *the irreſiſtibility of grief*.

*FINIS.*

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